Record of Christian Work

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THROUGH the kind coöperation of some of our readers we have been able to send sample copies of the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK to a large number of friends during the past month. We greatly appreciate the help that is thus afforded us in giving our magazine wider circulation, and we shall always be glad to send sample copies to any whom our readers recommend.

THE article by Rev. William F. Gibbons on THOSE BLACK DIAMOND WOMEN AND CHILDREN on page 776, gives a new view of the suffering in the anthracite coal fields. Mr. Gibbons is thoroughly familiar with the present conditions, and he writes of things he has seen and known in his personal experience. The real sufferers are here, as in so many other human tragedies, the women and children, and it is in their behalf our special sympathies are enlisted.

WE would call special attention to the suggestion contained in Rev. N. L. Rockey's letter on page 808, that the readers of the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK support a missionary in India under Bishop Thoburn. The plan we believe is a practicable one and will appeal strongly to those who are interested in the wonderful work accomplished under Bishop Thoburn. We strongly commend the plan to our friends for their careful consideration and we shall be glad to receive funds for the object at once.

THE Church of God everywhere has need to be much in prayer for its missionaries in all lands, especially in the extreme west of China, where according to recent cables the situation is most critical. In the province of Si-chuen several mission stations have been attacked by the Boxers, an attempt even being made upon Chen-tu, the capital, which was, however, soon quelled by the officials. The Chinese government has issued a proclamation ordering the Si-chuen officials in the strongest terms to suppress the insurrection. There is no doubt, however, that the lives of many missionaries are in the greatest peril, and the recent murder of Messrs. Lowis and Bruce at Chen Cheo is not calculated to allay our fears.

THERE has been little of special note in the religious world during the past month. In New England the two most important gatherings have been the Sunday School Convention held in Springfield, Mass., October 7-9, and the Christian Endeavor Convention in Boston, October 15-17. The annual meeting of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was held at Oberlin, Ohio, on the fifteenth of the month.

WHILE some of these large gatherings may attract special attention, the quiet and earnest efforts which have characterized the opening of the church work for the new year have been of equal if not more significance. Much that has been done has been quietly undertaken and achieved with little newspaper notice. Especially is this the case in the work of the Evangelistic Committee of the Presbyterian Church, who are undertaking plans and making arrangements for an extensive campaign during the coming season. Rev. John Balcolm Shaw of New York, and Mr. John Converse of Philadelphia, have

devoted their energies to the work, and it is largely due to their zeal that so much has already been achieved.

IN the season of political elections there are always a certain number of people—happily limited—who, on the pretext that their citizenship is in heaven, refuse to exercise the responsibilities of their citizenship in the Government of the United States. In other words, because they consider their citizenship in the Kingdom of God, they have no compunctions about letting the devil get more firmly in his grasp the kingdom of the world. This is not unworldliness, but a miserable form of selfishness and folly. Only by properly executing the duties thrust upon us here in this world—whether these same duties are to our liking or not—can we give evidence of our citizenship above. It is not alone a man's privilege to go to the polls, it is a Christian man's imperative duty.

IN Great Britain the all-absorbing theme in the religious press has been the educational bill. The Independents or Nonconformists have put up a very stiff resistance. To those who know nothing of the true state of affairs, but gather what few ideas they have from prejudiced sources, the excitement the measure has caused seems disproportionate to its real importance. It is undoubtedly true that only a short time ago a number of the best Church of England members so little realized the deep feeling of the Nonconformists that they considered and spoke of the resistance as mere sentimentalism. Now, however, after the recent victory of the Nonconformists in the elections at Leeds, many more are opening their eyes to the true state of affairs. Without doubt one of the bitterest things has been the indifference of churchmen to the feelings of Nonconformists. No one likes to be spoken of as one who is making a mountain out of a mole-hill, and when leading ministers were seriously advocating the spoliation of goods rather than submission to taxation on this measure, they were being patronizingly spoken of in terms of commiseration.

IT seems strange that this, the bitterest hostility between the two great forces of English Protestantism, should so immediately follow the chorus of demands and loud cries for Church unity which were so frequently and continuously heard at this time last year. It was on the last ten Sundays of the year that one of the ablest of the English canons delivered a series of sermons in Westminster Abbey on the subject of Unity, which were catholic in spirit and broad-minded in presentation. Now comes this deplorable straining of all ties, and it is as though a coach and four had been driven through all attempts at unity.

SUCH a condition of affairs is the result, more or less inevitable, of Church establishment. If it may be said seriously, the Independents are looking for aid equally from heaven and the Liberal party. It is not at all unlikely that the Liberal party may come into power again through the breach that this measure will make in the Conservative camp, and all are well aware of this. It is a sad but unfortunately too obvious fact that the Conservatives dread far more the political results of the measure than they do wounding the sensibilities of their Independent brethren.

THE teachers of the South in a conference during July, adopted a declaration of their educational policy and certain sections of this document are as encouraging as the conditions described are depressing. In many communities the good work a teacher can do is second to the work of no other individual of the community. The minister touches the life of his flock only at certain times. The teacher spends the greater part of the day with the child, and has the direction of all his powers. Particularly in

remote communities of the South, where the teacher is the best educated member of the village society, he or she has more influence with the child than the parents. In view of all this, one plea from the southern teachers should attract the attention of every young man or woman who is on the outlook for a life of usefulness. That plea is for men and women who are willing to make teaching their life-work, instead of considering it, as many do, only a makeshift till some other better paid position offers itself.

A GENERATION IN A LONDON PULPIT.

Dr. Joseph Parker.

Thirty-three years ago, September, 1869, an experiment was undertaken in a city pulpit which not a few even friendly observers regarded as almost hopeless and desperate. In the evolution of that experiment some things have happened which may be of at least momentary interest to public men and others who watch the ways and the habits of city life. A generation in London is different from a generation not only anywhere else, but different from a generation even in its own growing suburbs. Old Bailey and Clapham-common, for example, are not the same London, neither is Shoreditch to be thought of in relation to Piccadilly, though they are both included in the same metropolis. In a certain well-understood sense "there is nobody in the city on Sundays"; the busy millions who are there on secular days may be supposed to have no time in those feverish hours for other-world affairs. We shall, in fact, never know what hold religion, ecclesiastically so-called, has on the public mind until that remarkable compound of ghostliness and commerce has to compete, in what may be called the open market, with other claimants and rival interests. Then, and not till then, shall we know which of two opposing worlds has the upper hand in the thoughts and desires of men. When theatres, concert-halls, picture galleries, and popular amusements of all sorts are in full and approved operation on Sundays, we shall know exactly how far religion holds its own. At present, and for many centuries, religion has enjoyed a kind of monopoly of one day in the week. Sunday has been emphatically church day. Hardly any other place is available. Theatres, music halls, concert rooms, picture galleries are, as a rule, on Sunday all in darkness and silence. It almost comes to Hobson's choice, or has done until within thirty years—go to church or go nowhere. Not to go to church on Sunday was once a kind of disgrace; certainly it gave rise to a good deal of comment and disquieting suspicion. Why does not your neighbor go to church? Is he a rampant infidel or, at least, a contemptuous Gallio? He was, at all events, a marked man, to be accounted for. All this, within the last thirty years, has been largely changed—changed not by an organized and aggressive revolution in manners, but quietly, imperceptibly, and little by little, a kind of night and day action, men hardly knowing whether it was done by day or by night; but that it has been done is a fact at once glaring and indisputable. Speaking in full view of many distinct and impressive exceptions, it may be said that England has now no medieval Sunday. Marked inroads have been made on that ecclesiastical monopoly. England has liberalized and modernized its characteristic Sunday into a very pale and harmless figure. The Church herself, in all her communions, has assisted the metamorphosis. The battle has not always been between Sabbat-

tarianism and anti-Sabbatarianism; it has often been, not a battle, indeed, but a surrender, simply a quiet giving up of traditional claims and a concession hardly disquieted by a murmur. Men who awoke on Sunday morning with firm sabbatic convictions have spent the evening of the same day in social functions supposed to be more lively than hymn-singing or sermon-hearing. For a time there was a great outcry against every attempt to continentalize the English Sunday, forgetting that before Sunday can be really continentalized we must first continentalize the English climate. The fickle weather always stands between England and the catastrophe of a French Sunday. The weather is still orthodox enough to vote with the church, or, if it does not actually fill the church, it maliciously soaks the band and makes the park a pool, thus indirectly suggesting the neighboring church as at least a temporary shelter.

In the lapse of a generation we have seen enough to give us heart about Sunday and all the questions related to it, or bound up with its fortunes. It is a remarkable fact, so far as my experience goes, that nothing that has been deliberately organized in opposition to Sunday has ever succeeded. For a time it has made a splash, but the day of grief has sooner or later darkened upon it. This fact cannot be put amongst the superstitions; it is too bulky a fact to permit of such easy disposal. For a time, as I have admitted, there may be much hilarious shouting and mighty bragging by unspiritual men, but the laugh of the derisive heavens has always announced the rout of the assailant and the filing of his petition in bankruptcy. I put my hand to this as to an affidavit. I will go further and testify that within my personal observation no heterodoxy permanently thrives. Even magic-lanterns "have their day and cease to be." They are toys for a season only. Odd practices, eccentric doctrines, fads, megrims, and all sorts of intellectual curiosities may flourish for a time, but "having no deepness of earth they soon wither away." False doctrine, however eloquently expounded, hardly ever pays its own rent. Many a startling heterodoxy intended to bring in an intellectual renaissance has had its light cut off by some sordid gas company, callously indifferent to modern speculation and the artistic temperament. Account for it as we may, it is the gospel old and undefiled that alone can stand the wear and tear of time, and grow younger with the wasting years. The only thing that is really new is the Christian Evangel, and that is because its newness is really old. When Time draws a draught of water from a surface pool she mocks the world's thirst; only when she draws from eternal springs is she the servant and messenger of God. In the last thirty-three years I have seen enough dead theories, exploded nightmares, and discarded hypotheses to make a full-sized cemetery. They have gone the way of all the earth. They flamboyantly entered the world as an amateur military band, and coughed their way out of it as a squad of consumptive tramps. Whenever a preacher has a new and sparkling theory in religion, I know that the first nail in his coffin has been driven and clinched.

Another point of special significance and momentousness is the easy way in which some men, of unquestionable sincerity, come, in course of time, to disregard their own signature. This is the case in a remarkable degree in reference to matters of creed and fellowship. When a man deliberately elects to join a body of Christians by solemnly accepting all its fundamental beliefs, is he at liberty to change or modify his faith without giving notice to his co-believers? Would the signing of a commercial partnership deed not require certain obligations to be honorably complied with? I do not object to a man expanding or even disavowing, any mechanical creed, but I do object to a signature being reduced to a dead letter. The signature should be the man. Let the man, if so minded, change his creed, but at

the same time let him not think that he can with honor take orthodox money for teaching heterodox doctrine. Let all things be done in open day. No teacher is, for example, at liberty to teach Unitarian doctrine in a Trinitarian pulpit, or *vice versa*. For my own part, I would not sign a binding and final creed drawn up by my own hand, because words change their applications, standpoints vary day by day, even atmosphere follows the laws of evolution, and the infinite can never be finally expressed in terms of time and space. God must, in mere decency, be left some room even in His own Church. A creed that does not admit of expansion may be a useful guidepost, but a living fruit-tree it never can be. Why do intelligent men sign creeds? By a large exercise of faith a man might possibly sign, at least temporarily, the multiplication table, because its daring assumptions (by no means so innocent as they look) have approved themselves to the general mind, but arithmetic must by its very nature differ from theology. What I insist upon is that, having signed a creed, every man is bound to honor his own signature until he has publicly and perhaps penitently withdrawn it. Illumination resulting in expansion does not imply either falsehood or inconsistency on the part of the individual. Tribute must always be paid to increasing light.

During the last generation very noticeable changes have taken place in the art and practice of preaching. Artificialism has been largely replaced by reality. Common sense has superseded yeasty rhetoric. Melvillism is dead; Croly no longer heads a school; Robert Hall is all but forgotten; the Claytonian cult is quietly laughed at as a grotesque shadow of a past never to be reinstated. To-day the man who would preach with true and lasting effect must be sincere, intelligent, and sympathetic—in a word, he must be a man, a teacher, a friend. Preaching is the most impertinent of all impertinences, if there be not behind it and round about it a sense of authority other and better than human. The preacher must deliver a positive and authorized message rather than suggest tentative and variable theories; he must have an articulate and urgent gospel; he is not called upon to exploit his latest invention in pulpit dreams. What preacher does not remember the time when he could never satisfactorily conclude a sermon except "amid the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds," yet who would now, in the twentieth century, willingly break up the world and sit down upon the hot ashes of his native sphere even in a hysterical peroration? Here and there windy rhetoricians are still to be found, but the condemnation of death is written upon their gusty work, and they are doomed to early oblivion.

They begin in words, and in words they will end. Intelligent, sympathetic, and experimental preaching will never lack audience and appreciation. Such preaching happily prevails in all churches to-day. He who preaches to broken hearts preaches to all generations and to all degrees of intelligence.

A few thumb-nail sketches must suffice for the rest.

To-day, for instance, there is no such firm as Dombey & Son. That old firm is now Son & Dombey. The elder Dombey who founded the firm and lived above the business pensively recalls the past, whilst "son," cigaretted and beflowered, drives a smart span, constantly in danger of making a prolonged call in Basinghall Street.

To-day there is no such sequence as master and man. That has gone with the categories of Aristotle. Demos is on the box-seat, and the master has to be taken where the driver pleases.

To-day there is no such picturesque gradation as mistress and maid. The well-known passage "As the eyes of a maiden are unto the hands of her mistress" will soon be "revised" into "As the eyes of a mistress are unto the hands of her maid"—meals, holidays, and hospitalities must be arranged to

please the cook and housemaid.

To-day it is not true that "he who pays the piper calls the tune"; on the contrary, he who pays the piper must take whatever tune the piper likes best to play and be thankful that the trombone is not thrown at his head.

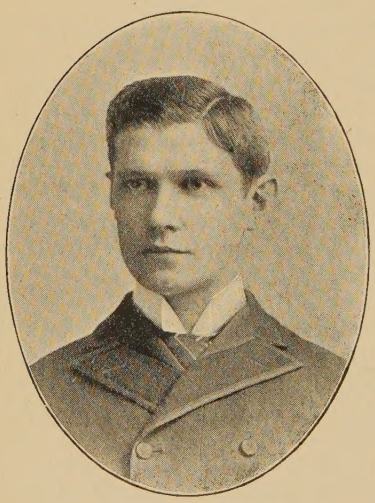
To-day there is no privacy. Gutter journalism has made privacy impossible. What with telegrams, telephones, interviews, cables, and fertile imagination, private life has disappeared. The hearthstone has been exchanged for the housetop. Life is now in very deed a variety of "the open-air treatment."

And yet the quenchless world lives on, and in a rough way thrives and fattens. The world, happily, is not its own engineer. "There is a divinity that shapes our ends." Have faith in God. Generations come and go on leaden feet, but the God of generations dwells in the abiding tabernacle whence all the hidden wonders of ages pass slowly but vividly across the plane of time.

London, England.

SOME ARABIAN TRADITIONS.

Samuel M. Zwemer, F. R. G. S., Bahrein, Arabia.



SAMUEL M. ZWEMER, F. R. G. S.

The tales of the Arabian Nights are strange, but many told in Arabia to-day are stranger still. The following stories taken from trustworthy Moslem sources, are most heartily accepted as true by all pious Moslems. They verify the verdict of an old Arabian traveler: "Such is the vanity of their religion, *which can only stand by the suspension of the human understanding.*"

A great many Arabian traditions could not be put into English dress without first being expurgated beyond recognition. There are one thousand four hundred and sixty-five collections of traditions in existence although only six of them are counted among the classics. The classical tradition-mongers were higher critics after a sort and actually sifted the chaff from the wheat (according to their way of thinking). Abou Davood, one of their number, states in his massive work that he received as trustworthy only four thousand eight hundred traditions out of five hundred thousand! The following stories would, on Moslem authority, be labelled XXX or A No. 1.

HOW MOHAMMED WAS PURIFIED.

It is related for the information of after ages, that when two years had elapsed of the infancy of Mohammed, that "blessing of the human race," he was brought by his nurse Halimah to visit his mother Aminah at Mecca; but after a short stay, under pretense that the atmosphere of the place was too warm for him, she persuaded Aminah to permit her to carry him back to the tribe of Beni Assud. Here the mysterious child, "upon whom be peace," shed the lustre of his countenance in the abode of her family.

One day he had wandered, with his foster-brothers, to a neighboring valley, when, about noon, Zemeirah, one of the boys, came sobbing home to beg that she would hasten to take care of Mohammed, because a band of extraordinary beings had descended from the skies and had snatched the child from them and carried him to the top of a neighboring hill, where they were ripping open his belly. Accompanied by her husband, Halimah ran to the spot and there saw Mohammed perched on the highest part of the hill. When they called to him to know what had happened, he told them the following story: He said that two persons had appeared to him, one of them bearing in his hand a sword of burnished silver and the other an emerald basin filled with snow. Having conveyed him to the spot on which he now stood, one of them laid him gently down and cut him open. They then took out his intestines and having washed them in the snow in the emerald basin returned them to their place. The second of the two personages now thrust his hand into the inner part of his chest and took out his heart. This was laid open in two equal parts, and one of the men removed therefrom a black spot stained with blood, which he immediately cast away from him, saying that it was the seal of Satan—the evil propensity—the original sin. After this they introduced into the heart a particular sort of substance which they carried with them but which he was unable to describe. It was of softer texture and produced a more delightful sensation than anything he had ever known. Lastly, they rubbed his breast with their hands, completely healing the incision and left him pure within, spotless of all original sin or trace of guilt. This is said to have happened when the prophet of God was five, some say six, years of age.

THE HOG AND THE CAT.

All the animals are believed to have been created before Adam except the hog and the cat. As related in the history of Arabia by Abn Jaafer Mohammed El Tabari, the creation of these two animals was on this wise. In two instances the animal creation was extended in a manner equally singular and curious. When from the accumulation of filth in the ark during the flood, arising from the close confinement of so many animals together, the place had become offensive beyond measure, God commanded Noah to pass his hand along the back of the elephant and from the tail dropped a hog which hastened in a moment to devour the filth and so cleansed the ark. Again when an apprehension was awakened that the sides of the ark would be gnawed through by the rats which had multiplied to an alarming extent, Noah supplicated the Deity to interfere for the deliverance of His servant. In reply he was directed to pass his hand in the same manner along the back of the lion; and that noble animal, being seized with a sneezing fit, from his nostrils issued a cat by which the mischievous brood, which had so endangered the security of the ark, were soon destroyed.

THE WELL OF ZEM ZEM.

When Abraham came to the land of Hejaz and dismounted Hagar and her child from the ass, he laid before them some bread and a pitcher of water and offered up a prayer for her preservation, and in spite of her entreaties, being commanded of God, he saddled the ass and left her behind. Hagar and the infant Ishmael, the father of the Arabs, remained in the barren spot until their scanty supply of bread and water was entirely consumed. Then, urged by the cravings of hunger and thirst, the hapless mother hastened to the top of the neighboring hill, Safah, in the hope of discovering a spring or some pool of water for their immediate relief. But having wistfully sought in vain in every direction, she descended thence and proceeded to the top of the opposite hill of Merwah, where her search proved equally unavailing. Again she ascended to the

summit of Safah, resuming her search, but without success. This she repeated seven times successively. (This running to and fro between these hills is now a regular part of the duties of every pilgrim to Mecca in memory of Hagar.) In the meantime, equally impelled by the agonies of thirst and impatient at the absence of its mother, the child continued to cry most bitterly, at the same time violently beating its heels against the earth. Suddenly, strange to relate, a transparent spring of water bubbled up at its feet and shortly overflowed the surrounding spot. This was the fountain that subsequently received the name of Zem Zem. Attracted by the cries of her child, Hagar was now returning in despair, having discovered neither water nor a human being to direct her in her search. When on rejoining the child, she discovered, to her unspeakable satisfaction, water streaming along the earth, her first impulse was to gather up the earth around it in order to confine the precious gift and prevent it running to waste. For this reason it settled at once round the head of the spring; otherwise, as stated by the prophet of God, "upon whom be peace," the well of Zem Zem would have furnished a noble stream flowing to the infinite advantage and delight of the inhabitants through the very center of Mecca. In a few days, when the water stood high about the fountain head, the fowls of the air began to be attracted to the spot from every side. This circumstance did not escape the observation of a party of the Arab tribe of Jorham who were also exploring the hills for water on the failure of their well a day's journey from Mecca. When they came to the spot they found an abundance of water and Hagar with Ishmael seated near the spring. Hagar made a covenant with the Jorhamites, and they settled down to live in the valley near Zem Zem (for mutual protection) until Ishmael should attain to manhood.

The Zem Zem well is held in great esteem by all Moslems on the ground of this tradition. Meccans always advise pilgrims to break their fast with the water from it and it is transmitted to all parts of the Moslem world in glazed earthen jars covered over with basket work and carefully sealed. Religious Moslems always keep a little of it on hand, if they can afford it, to use on the eye to brighten the vision of old age, and they imbibe a few drops at the hour of death. To drink it is said to facilitate the pronunciation of Arabic, at least this advice is seriously given to foreign students at Mecca!

In reality the Zem Zem well is an old mineral spring, whose waters are slightly purgative, and resemble in taste a weak solution of Epsom salts. At present the well is a great pestilence breeder, for the Turkish chemists testify "that it is abominably polluted by the filthiest matter," while an English chemist's analysis shows that it contains an amount of pollution "at least six times as great as that contained in an equal volume of London sewage." Yet people wonder why cholera breaks out almost annually among the pilgrims at Mecca.

WHY MOSES WAS NOT ELOQUENT.

It is related by the Moslem commentators that the mother of Moses made an ark of papyrus and pitched and put it in some cotton and, having laid the child therein, committed it to the river, a branch of which flowed through Pharaoh's garden. This stream carried the ark into a fish pond near which Pharaoh was then sitting with his wife Asiyeh, the daughter of Muzahem; and that the king having commanded it to be opened and finding in it a beautiful child took a fancy to it and ordered it to be brought up. Pharaoh was one day carrying the babe in his arms when suddenly Moses laid hold of the king's beard and plucked it in a very rough manner. This put Pharaoh into such a passion that he ordered the child to be put to death. But Asiyeh represented to him that he was but a child who could not distinguish between a burning coal and

a ruby. The king ordered the experiment to be made, and a live coal and a ruby being set before Moses he took the coal and put it into his mouth, burning his tongue. Thereupon he was pardoned, but always after had an impediment in his speech.

THE WICKED JEW.*

In the days of the children of Israel there was a sinful and flagitious man who for the space of two hundred years wearied every one by the enormity of his offences. When he died they threw his corpse upon a dung-hill, but no sooner had this been done than Gabriel, coming to Moses, said: Thus saith the almighty God: This day My friend has departed from this world and the people have cast his corpse upon a dung-hill. Now let that corpse be dressed and prepared for burial without delay: and ye shall speak unto the children of Israel that they forthwith recite the burial service over his bier if they desire pardon. Then Moses marveled exceedingly and inquired why forgiveness was required, and God answered: The Lord well knoweth all the sins which that sinner hath during these two hundred years committed; and verily he never could have been pardoned. But one day this wicked man was reading the Torah and seeing there the name of the blessed Mohammed he wept and pressed the page to his eyes. This honor and reverence shown to My beloved was pleasing unto Me and from the blessed effects of that single act I have blotted out the sins of the whole two hundred years. "Lovers of the blessed Mohammed! rejoice in your hearts and be assured that love for the holy prophet, the Lord of creation, is in every possible condition the means of salvation."

SATAN'S PRAYER.

Another "true tradition" relates that from the days of his pride, Satan used every day to receive from an angel, delegated for the purpose, a blow on his face so severe that the effects remained until the following day. When the Lord of Creation, the prophet of Islam, appeared, Satan besought him that he should not be shut out from the benefits of his advent, seeing that these are promised in the Koran to all creation. The Lord therefore commanded that from that day forward the blow should be discontinued.

AN EARLY AERIAL SHIP.

Be it remembered that the spirits made Solomon, "upon whom be peace," two lions which were placed at the foot of his throne; and two eagles which were set above it. When he mounted the throne the lions stretched out their paws, and when he sat down the eagles shaded him with their wings. He had also a carpet of green silk on which his throne was placed. This carpet was of prodigious length and breadth and sufficient for all his army to stand on, the men placing themselves on his right hand, the *jinn* on his left. When all were in order the wind at his command took up the carpet and transported it with all that were upon it wherever he pleased; the army of birds at the same time flying over their heads and forming a living canopy to shade them from the sun.

When Solomon built the temple he employed the genii in the work and, perceiving, before the edifice was completed, that his end was drawing nigh, he begged of God that his death might be concealed from the genii until they had entirely finished the building. God therefore so ordered it that Solomon died as he stood at his prayers, leaning on his staff, which supported the body in that position for a full year; and the genii, supposing him to be alive, continued their work during that time, at the expiration whereof the temple being completed, a worm which had gotten into the staff, ate it through and the corpse fell to the ground.

* This is given on page 3 of a Life of Mohammed, published at Ajra in 1852, and is also recorded in the book Susan-El-Ayoon, an authority in all Eastern Arabia.

The devil once flew away with Solomon's signet ring and threw it in the sea. The signet was swallowed by a fish, which being taken and given to Solomon he found the ring in its belly, and having by this means recovered the kingdom, took the devil, tying a great stone to his neck, and threw him into the Sea of Tiberias.

After Solomon had finished the temple, so the same author relates, he went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and, after having tarried here a long time, he proceeded to Yemen, leaving Mecca at daybreak and reaching Sana'a by noon. He lacked water to make his ablutions, but ordered the lap-wing to find it, which she did. Bilkis, the queen of Yemen, dressed boys like girls and girls like boys to try Solomon's wisdom; she also gave him a pearl not drilled and an onyx drilled with a crooked hole; he distinguished the boys from the girls by their manner of drinking, and ordered a worm to bore the pearl for him and to pass a thread for him through the onyx.

This story is from one of the most orthodox commentators, who expressly states that he rejects all doubtful traditions and gives only those which are wholly authentic. Is it a wonder that Sprenger gives utterance to this piece of delicious sarcasm, after remarking on the Koran interpretation of Moslem divines? *"Theology, in fact, had now made such happy progress that men looked on common sense as a mere human attribute—the reverse being that which they expected from the Deity."*

A people like the Arabs, fed for ages on stories like the above, which are related on the authority of God and His prophet, can have no sense of historical criticism or love for absolute truth and believe all sorts of fables and relate marvelous things of the doings of genii and men in the earth, the air and the sea.

Yet there is this strange paradox; that while even the learned accept all the fables of the Koran and swallow down tradition whole, they are captious and pseudo-critical to the utmost when attacking other religions, especially Christianity. It is well to remember this when we are asked to believe that the Mohammedan religion is all contained in the Koran. Who seeks to understand what Islam is from the Koran will succeed about as well as one who should draw his ideas of Romanism in Spain from the New Testament. Mohammedanism has only had a local reformation and its protestants, the Wahabees, are a dying Arabian sect. The whole system, as Mohammed taught it, has for many centuries been covered over, cased in and propped up by a vast mass of superstitious rubbish called traditions, which the prophet himself would neither recognize nor own as a part of his teaching. The life of Mohammed, as it actually was written by his earliest biographer, Ibn Hisham, or as we see it piecemeal in the Koran, is very different from that of "the Light of God," "the Glorious in this world and that to come," "who was before all things and first of God's creation." Yet this latter is the present day full-length blasphemous portrait of the Mecca camel driver who has become a God.

One has only to read a life of Mohammed in Arabic, and by a Moslem, to see why it is that to the Moslem mind Jesus Christ has no form nor comeliness and no beauty that they should desire Him. "Like priest, like people." A sensual mind feasts on the sensuous, the visible, the earthly. An ignorant mind cannot discriminate between the incredible and the supernatural; nay, seems to regard the incredibility the criterion of miracle and the irrational as proof of the finger of God. Had Sinbad the Sailor a place in the Koran his story would give a right to be classed among the greatest prophets. It is well known that Mohammed did not, during his life, lay claim to the power of working a miracle. It is not so well known that tradition teems with miracles wrought by him before his birth, during his life, and after his death.

Traditions and stories like the above admit of no argument. There are too many of them. You can undermine a wall but not a mountain. The Koran has not been made of no effect but *doubly* effective by traditions. Its evident falsehoods are proved by three traditions to be the centers of all truth. The Koran says, "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet." Traditions puts it, "There is no prophet like Mohammed and Allah is his God." The emphasis has long ago passed from the first to the second clause of the creed. *Aut Cæsar aut nullus.*

Well might the missionary among the Moslem raise the old complaint of Judah, "There is much rubbish, so that we are not able to build the wall."

FILLING UP THE SUFFERINGS.*

J. H. Jowett, M. A.

"Fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." Col. i. 24.

"I fill up that which is behind!" Not that the ministry of reconciliation is incomplete. Not that Gethsemane and Calvary have failed. Not that the debt of guilt is only partially paid, and there is now a threatening remnant which demands the sacrifice of human blood. The ministry of atonement is perfected. There is no outstanding debt. "Jesus paid it all." In the one commanding sacrifice for human sin Calvary leaves nothing for you and me to do. In the bundle of the Saviour's sufferings every needful pang was borne.

> "Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
> In my place condemned He stood,
> Sealed my pardon with His blood."

I can add nothing to that. There is nothing lacking. The sacrifice is all sufficient.

And yet " I fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ." The sufferings need a herald. A story needs a teller. A gospel requires an evangelist. A finished case demands efficient presentation. The monarch must repeat himself through his ambassadors. The atoning Saviour must express Himself through the ministering Paul. The work of Calvary must proclaim itself in the sacrificial saints. In his own sphere, and in his own degree, Paul must be Christ repeated. As a minister in Greece and Asia Minor Paul must re-incarnate the sacrificial spirit of Jerusalem and Galilee. He must "fill up that which is behind in the sufferings of Christ." The suggestion is this—all ministry for the Master must be possessed by the sacrificial spirit of the Master. If Paul is to help in the redemption of Rome he must himself incarnate the death of Calvary. If he is to be a minister of life he must "die daily." "The blood is the life." Without the shedding of blood there is no regenerative toil. Every real lift implies a corresponding strain, and wherever the crooked is made straight, "virtue" must go out of the erect. The spirit of Calvary is to be re-incarnated in Ephesus and Athens and Rome and London and Birmingham; the sacrificial succession is to be maintained through the ages, and we are to "fill up that which is behind in the sufferings of Christ."

"I fill up that which is behind!" That is not the presumptous boast of perilous pride; it is the quiet, awed aspiration of privileged fellowship with the Lord. Here is an apostle, a man who thinks meanly enough of himself, counting himself an abortion, regarding himself as "the least of the apostles, not worthy to be called an apostle," and yet he dares to whisper his own name alongside his Master's, and

* The annual sermon of the London Missionary Society, preached in the City Temple.

humbly to associate his own pangs with the sufferings of redemptive love. "I fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ." Is the association permissible? Are the sufferings of Christ and His apostles complementary, and are they profoundly co-operative in the ministry of salvation? Dare we proclaim them together?

Here is an association. "In all their afflictions he was afflicted," "Who is weak and I am not weak; who is offended and I burn not?" Is the association alien and uncongenial, or is it altogether legitimate and fitting? "In all their afflictions he was afflicted"—the deep, poignant, passionate sympathy of the Saviour; "Who is weak and I am not weak?"—the deep, poignant, passionate sympathy of the ambassador. The kinship in the succession is vital. The daily dying of the apostle corroborates and drives home the one death of his Lord. The suffering sympathies in Rome perfected the exquisite sensitiveness in Galilee and Jerusalem. The bleeding heart in Rome perfected the ministry of the broken heart upon the cross. Paul "filled up that which was behind of the sufferings of Christ."

Here, then, is a principle. The gospel of a broken heart demands the ministry of bleeding hearts. If that succession be broken we lose our fellowship with the King. As soon as we cease to bleed we cease to bless. When our sympathy loses its pang we can no longer be the servants of the passion. We no longer "fill up the sufferings of Christ," and not to "fill up" is to paralyze, and to "make the cross of Christ of none effect." Now the apostle was a man of the most vivid and realistic sympathy. "Who is weak and I am not weak?" His sympathy was a perpetuation of the passion. I am amazed at its intensity and scope. What a broad, exquisite surface of perceptiveness he exposed to the needs and sorrows of the race! Wherever there was a pang it tore the strings of his sensitive heart. Now it is the painful fears and alarms of a runaway slave, and now the dumb, dark agonies of people far away. The apostle felt as vividly as he thought, and he lived through all he saw. He was being continually aroused by the sighs and cries of his fellow men. He heard a cry from Macedonia, and the pain on the distant shore was reflected in his own life. That is the only recorded voice, but he was hearing them every day, wandering, pain-filled, fear-filled voices, calling out of the night, voices from Corinth, from Athens, from Rome also, and from distant Spain! "Who is weak and I am not weak?" He was exhausted with other folk's exhaustion, and in the heavy burdensomeness he touched the mystery of Gethsemane, and had fellowship with the sufferings of his Lord.

THE DANGER OF CALLOUSNESS.

My brethren, are we in this succession? Does the cry of the world's need pierce the heart, and ring even through the fabric of our dreams? Do we "fill up" our Lord's sufferings with our own sufferings, or are we the unsympathetic ministers of a mighty passion? I am amazed how easily I become callous. I am ashamed how small and insensitive is the surface which I present to the needs and sorrows of the world. I so easily become enwrapped in the soft wool of self-indulgency, and the cries from far and near cannot reach my easeful soul. "Why do you wish to return?" I asked a noble young missionary who had been invalided home: "Why do you wish to return?" "Because I can't sleep for thinking of them!" But, my brethren, except when I spend a day with my Lord, the trend of my life is quite another way. I cannot think about them because I am so inclined to sleep! A benumbment settles down upon my spirit, and the pangs of the world awake no corresponding sympathy. I can take my newspaper, which is oft-times a veritable cup-full of horrors, and I can peruse it at the breakfast table, and it does not add a single tang to my feast. I wonder if one who is so unmoved

can ever be a servant of the suffering Lord!

Here in my newspaper is the long, small-typed casualty list from the seat of war; or here is a half a column of the crimes and misdemeanors of my city; or here is a couple of columns descriptive of the hot and frantic doings of the race course; or here is a small corner paragraph telling me about some massacres in China; or here are two little hidden lines saying that a man named James Chalmers has been murdered in New Guinea! And I can read it all while I take my breakfast, and the dark record does not haunt the day with the mingled wails of the orphaned and the damned. My brethren, I do not know how any Christian service is to be fruitful if the servant is not primarily baptized in the spirit of a suffering compassion. We can never heal the needs we do not feel. Tearless hearts can never be the heralds of the passion. We must pity if we would redeem. We must bleed if we would be the ministers of the saving blood. We must perfect by our own passion the passion of the Lord, and by our own suffering sympathies we must "fill up that which is behind in the sufferings of Christ." "Put on, therefore, as God's elect, a heart of compassion."

A VITAL KINSHIP.

Here is another association. Can we find a vital kinship? "He offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears." So far the Master. "I would have you know how greatly I agonize for you." So far the apostle. The Saviour prayed "with strong crying and tears"; His apostle "agonized" in intercession! Is the association legitimate? Did not the agony at Rome "fill up" the "strong cryings" at Jerusalem? Does not the interceding apostle enter into the fellowship of his Master's sufferings, and perfect that "which is behind"? The intercession in Rome is akin to the intercession in Jerusalem, and both are affairs of blood. If the prayer of the disciple is to "fill up" the intercession of the Master, the disciple's prayer must be stricken with much crying and many tears. The ministers of Calvary must supplicate in bloody sweat, and their intercession must often touch the point of agony. If we pray in cold blood we are no longer the ministers of the cross. True intercession is a sacrifice, a bleeding sacrifice, a perpetuation of Calvary, a "filling up" of the sufferings of Christ. St. Catherine told a friend that the anguish which she experienced, in the realization of the sufferings of Christ, was greatest at the moment when she was pleading for the salvation of others. "Promise me that Thou wilt save them!" she cried, and stretching forth her right hand to Jesus, she again implored in agony: "Promise me, dear Lord, that Thou wilt save them. O give me a token that Thou wilt!" Then her Lord seemed to clasp her outstretched hand in His, and to give her the promise, and she felt a piercing pain as though a nail had been driven through the palm. I think I know the meaning of the mystic experience. She had become so absolutely one with the interceding Saviour that she entered into the fellowship of His crucifixion. Her prayers were red with sacrifice, and she felt the grasp of the pierced hand.

My brethren, this is the ministry which the Master owns, the agonized yearnings which perfect the sufferings of His own intercession. Are we in the succession? Do our prayers bleed? Have we felt the painful fellowship of the pierced hand? I am so often ashamed of my prayers. They so frequently cost me nothing; they shed no blood. I am amazed at the grace and condescension of my Lord that He confers any fruitfulness upon my superficial pains. I think of David Brainerd—I think of his magnificent ministry among the Indians, whole tribes being swayed by the evangel of the Saviour's love. I wonder at the secret, and the secret stands revealed. Gethsemane had its pale reflection in Susquehanna, and the "strong-cry-

ing" Saviour had a fellow laborer in His agonizing saint. Let me give you a few words from his journal, after one hundred and fifty years still wet with the hot tears of his supplications and prayers: "I think my soul was never so drawn out in intercession for others as it has been this night; I hardly ever so longed to live to God, and to be altogether devoted to Him; I wanted to wear out my life for Him." "I wrestled for the ingathering of souls, for multitudes of poor souls, personally, in many distant places. I was in such an agony, from sun half-an-hour high till near dark, that I was wet all over with sweat; but O, my dear Lord did sweat blood for such poor souls: I longed for more compassion." Mark the words, "I was in such an agony from sun half-an-hour high till near dark!" May we do what David Brainerd would not do, may we reverently whisper the word side by side with another and a greater word, "And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly?" I say, was not Susquehanna a faint echo of Gethsemane, and was not David Brainerd filling up "that which was behind in the sufferings of Christ"? Brethren, all vital intercession makes a draught upon a man's vitality. Real supplication leaves us tired and spent. Why, the Apostle Paul, when he wishes to express the poignancy of his yearning intercession for the souls of men, does not hesitate to lay hold of the pangs of labor to give it adequate interpretation. "Ye remember, brethren, our travail." "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again till Christ be formed in you." Again I say, it was only the echo of a stronger word, "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." Are we in the succession? Is intercession with us a travail, or is it a play-time, a recreation, the least exacting of all things, an exercise in which there is neither labor or blood? "The blood is the life." Bloodless intercession is dead. It is only the man whose prayer is a vital expenditure, a sacrifice, who holds fellowship with Calvary, and "fills up that which is behind in the sufferings of Christ."

"BACK TO THE STONES."

Here is another association. Is it legitimate? "Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee, and goest thou thither again?" "Having stoned Paul [at Lystra] they drew him out of the city supposing he had been dead." And Paul "returned again to Lystra!" Back to the stones! Is that in the succession? Is not the apostle the complement of his Master? Is he not doing in Lystra what his Master did in Judæa? Is he not filling up "that which was behind of the sufferings of Christ"? Back to the stones! "Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee, and goest thou thither again?" The Boxers of late sought to decimate thee, poor little flock, and goest thou thither again? The New Guineans have butchered thy Chalmers and thy Tomkins, and goest thou thither again? Mongolia has swallowed thy men and thy treasure, and its prejudice and its suspicions appear unmoved, and goest thou thither again? Thou hast been tiring thyself for years, seeking to redeem this man and that man, and he treats thee with indifference and contempt, and goest thou thither again? My brethren, are we familiar with the road that leads back to the stones? It was familiar to the Apostle Paul, and when he trod the heavy way he entered the fellowship of his Master's pains, and knew that he "filled out that which was behind of the sufferings" of his Lord. To go again and face the stones is to perpetuate the spirit of the Man Who "set his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem," even though it meant derision, desertion, and the cross. We never really know our Master until we kneel and toil among the driving stones. Only as we experience the "fellowship of his sufferings can we know the power of his resurrection." There is a sentence in David Hill's biography —that rare, gentle, refined spirit, who moved like a fragrance in his little part of China—a sentence which has

burnt itself into the very marrow of my mind. Disorder had broken out, and one of the rioters seized a huge splinter of a smashed door and gave him a terrific blow on the wrist, almost breaking his arm. And how is it all referred to? "There is a deep joy in actually suffering physical violence for Christ's sake." That is all! It is a strange combination of words—suffering, violence, joy! And yet I remember the evangel of the apostle, "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him," and I cannot forget that the epistle which has much to say about tribulation and loss, has most to say about rejoicing! "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth through Christ." "Out of the eater comes forth meat." These men did not shrink from the labor when the stones began to fly. Rebuff was an invitation to return! The strength of opposition acted upon them like an inspiration. Have you ever noticed that magnificent turn which the apostle gives to a certain passage in his second letter to the Corinthians? "I will tarry at Ephesus . . . . for a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and *there are many adversaries!*" "There are many adversaries . . . . I will tarry!" The majestic opposition constitutes a reason to remain! "There are many adversaries"; I will hold on! My brethren, that is the martyr's road, and he who treads that way lives the martyr's life, and even though he do not die the martyr's death he shall have the martyr's crown. Back to the stones! "It is the way the Master went," and to be found in that way is to perpetuate the sacrificial spirit, and to "fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ."

THE SECRET OF THE SACRIFICIAL LIFE.

To be, therefore, in the sacrificial succession, our sympathy must be a passion, our intercession must be a groaning, our beneficence must be a sacrifice, and our service must be a martyrdom. In everything there must be the shedding of blood. How can we attain unto it? What is the secret of the sacrificial life? It is here. The men and the women who willingly and joyfully share the fellowship of Christ's sufferings are vividly conscious of the unspeakable reality of their own personal redemption. They never forget the pit out of which they have been digged, and they never lose the remembrance of the grace that saved them. "He loved me, and gave himself for me"; *therefore* "I glory in tribulation!" By the grace of God I am what I am; *therefore* "I will very gladly spend and be spent!" The insertion of the "therefore" is not illegitimate: it is the implied conjunction which reveals the secret of the sacrificial life. When Henry Martyn reached the shores of India he made this entry in his journal, "I desire to burn out for my God," and at the end of the far-off years the secret of his grand enthusiasm stood openly revealed. "Look at me," he said to those about him as he was dying—"Look at me, the vilest of sinners, but saved by grace! Amazing that I can be saved!" It was that amazement, wondering all through his years, that made him such a fountain of sacrificial energy in the service of his Lord.

My brethren, are we in the succession? Are we shedding our blood? Are we filling up "that which is behind in the sufferings of Christ"? They are doing it among the heathen. It was done in Uganda, when that handful of lads, having been tortured, and their arms cut off, and while they were being slowly burned to death, raised a song of triumph, and praised their Saviour in the fire, "singing till their shriveled tongues refused to form the sound." They are doing it in China, the little remnant of the decimated churches gathering here and there upon the very spots of butchery and martyrdom, and renewing their covenant with the Lord. They are "filling up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ." They are doing it among the missionaries. James Hannington was doing it when he wrote this splendidly heroic word,

when he was encountered by tremendous opposition: "I refuse to be disappointed; I will only praise!" James Chalmers was doing it when, after long years of hardship and difficulty, he proclaimed his unalterable choice: "Recall the twenty-one years, give me back all its experience, give me its shipwrecks, give me its standings in the face of death, give it me surrounded with savages with spears and clubs, give it me back again with spears flying about me, with the club knocking me to the ground—give it me back, and I will still be your missionary!" Are *we* in the succession?

"A noble army, men and boys,
The matron and the maid,
Around the Saviour's throne rejoice,
In robes of light arrayed;
They climbed the steep ascent of Heaven
Through peril, toil and pain!
O God, to us may grace be given
To follow in their train."

THE ONE HUNDREDTH PSALM.*

John Kelman, M. A.

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves: we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him and bless his name. For the Lord is good, his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations."

This Psalm, expressed at the close of Israel's exile, gathers up into its wonderful words many of her national thoughts and characteristic feelings. You have mention in it of the creation; you have mention in it of the successive generations of men, the temple and its songs, and human life with God looked upon as the Shepherd of it, the favorite and characteristic metaphor of Israel; and it seems to me that for all time this Psalm may gather up for the successive generations of God's people, and for the successive centuries of human life, much that is most characteristic and much that means for the heart and soul of them a great deal. Travel and dream of empire, the commerce and the literature of the times, man's conception of his relation with his God and with men of other nations,—all these pass in review before the majestic figure of the Almighty, and His worshiper knows the true inner meaning of this human life.

This Psalm is a great outburst of gladness. From ninety-three to ninety-nine, you have a kind of prophetic oratorio, a continuous series under the title, "Jehovah is King," and this Psalm is its doxology. If you care to read over these seven Psalms preceding it and then to read this, you will see that this is the summary, the putting into a few words of the same thoughts which have been expressed in the other Psalms; the joy of the nation expressing itself now in a little space. It was a song to be sung during thanksgiving, during thankoffering; and after all is said, really, brothers and sisters, it is not a Psalm to be analyzed much, but just to be sung by a great and glad congregation. That is the true commentary on the one hundredth Psalm. There is very little consecutive about it except just as it rings the changes upon the idea of joy in the Lord.

And yet that thought of joy in the Lord is so expressed as to strike home, and just in the by-going it is interesting to notice that it is expressed in its artistic expression in this Psalm. Art and joy have been nearer to each other in the history of the world than people

* Address given at Northfield during the Summer Bible School, July, 1902.

sometimes seem to imagine, and joy here finding its artistic expression, as it seems to me, gives us a peculiarly suggestive thought just to begin with.

One of our great art writers has told us that works of art are the expression of their makers' delight. It is quite true that art has expressed sorrow. It is the sob which the artist puts into his music, or his paintings, or his sculpture, that makes the world weep and understand compassion. But surely this is a poor view of the world. We must not imagine that sadness is in any way connected with the essential thing in art. No; joy and delight, the natural uplift and spring of human life; these go deeper into the secret of art, after all, and every workman, every mere artisan who rejoices in his day's task, whether it be the making of a poem like this, or whether it be the making of that which he makes in the commonest labor of his hands, I say he who has learned to rejoice in the making of things, that man changes from artisan to artist in the rejoicing.

But all that is in passing. There are four things in this Psalm that I would like to call your attention to this morning. First, the duty of joy; then the generosity of joy; then the humility of joy, and then the outlook of joy.

THE DUTY OF JOY.

First of all, in the first two verses, that ringing command of delight that you get there: "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence singing," in that you have the *duty of joy*. Does it not shame us to remember that this Psalm is recited every day, except Sabbaths and some festivals, in the Jewish synagogues? These indomitable Jews have a good many things to teach to Christian people. Think of them singing this glad song so continually, think of the daily offering of praise that it means from hearts that must often be sad while they are singing it. What laggards in spirit we are, we Christians, how we have to rouse and urge ourselves to gladness. Oh, joy is a surprise and a luxury to half the Christian world, not thought of as a plain duty, like the ten commandments, a thing which has to be done if one would please God, one of the essential factors in Christian character. And, because it is that, a duty which God commands, we may be sure that it is at our command, for God never commands anything from His people which they cannot fulfill. If you and I would fulfill our destiny as Christian people effectively, we must learn to obey this command of God's, "Rejoice in the Lord."

This duty of joy has been the burden of very many great singers of the world. It is a very striking thing how it smote upon the conscience of Dante. Dante, who led his readers down such terrible slopes of death and misery, pauses here and there to remind them that those who in the bright sunshine have not rejoiced are condemned to the gloom that they have chosen; and at times one might almost say that the main message of Dante through all his work is the duty of gladness. Browning is continually at it. "God 's in His heaven; all is right with the world," in the magnificent optimism of his Pippa Passes. Robert Louis Stevenson has spoken it to America and to his own land, and is speaking in the healthiest voice that is ringing out on us in these days, I think. Have you read, "The Celestial Surgeon"?

> "If I have faltered more or less
> In my great task of happiness;
> If I have gone about my race
> And shown no glorious morning face."

Think of that, "Glorious morning face." What a magnificent benediction upon a Christian day it is to have these words to think of as one goes. And think of the man that wrote them, that terrible lifelong fight with disease, that daily struggle with death, through which he kept his spirit. There is an essay of his that has often gone home to my heart, as it has to the heart of every Scotch lad, called, "The Lan-

tern Bearers." When we were little chaps in the old land, one of the greatest delights we had was, on dark nights, to have certain little lanterns, cheap to buy and poor enough as a means of giving light to the world, which we bound about us. We lit them, and fastened our top coats over the top of them, and nobody knew they were there except they were very near us, for the things smelt very bad. We went through the world on dark nights, knowing that our lantern was alight,—the secret of a young child's heart. That is something that has gone with me through all the years and gladdened many a difficult day afterwards. Just to know you have a light somewhere and it is burning there, although it may be there is little to show for it! That is the secret of his essay on "Lantern Bearers." That is the secret of the joy and courage that he ran through all the darkness of his life with, and still believed in the gladness that God gives to man.

Well, it was an old story; it wasn't he that discovered that. Here is the hundredth Psalm at it, and men long before that had known about rejoicing as a duty. Christ knew it! Did you ever take seriously that command of Christ, "Rejoice and be exceeding glad"? Why, we think of that as a kind of counsel of perfection, a kind of promise that He may possibly give to some people. It was a command as much as any of the other beatitudes. "Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven."

THE GENEROSITY OF JOY.

But you have here also the *generosity of joy*. "All ye lands" are to rejoice. That is an easier thing for us to say than it was for Israel. Some of the lands had done hardly by Israel, and this is a second great advance in Israel's sentiment. Formerly there had been often little joy in her conception but for the one nation of Israel, and bitterness had entered even into her prayers; but here the blessing of Abraham is becoming the heritage of the Gentiles, and Jehovah is also the God of all the earth, and all nations are to flow to Jerusalem to bow, not before Israel, but before her God. He is the light, and the gladdener of all the earth, making all the nations share the priceless gain of His song. You see what her travels had done for Israel. She was a traveled people; she knew of people that lived beyond the horizon; she thought wistfully of the Phœnician ships; she remembered that belt of nations far to the east of Babylon, and in the dim distance she recognized faces of the savage tribes that she had never seen or spoken with; but there were hearts beating, and over them all the God of gladness, Whose command came out ringing through the lands and beyond the seas through her, "Rejoice in the Lord, all ye lands!" What a generous thought of them all it was! God was educating His people toward the kingdom of heaven that Christ proclaimed.

But it was not only expanding geographically; it was the expanding knowledge of God that expanded their hearts to this generosity. The new joy of God was gladdening this people. Remember, he who fears his God, he whose worship is mental fear, creeps into his corner to worship and does it alone. But he who rejoices in God worships Him a free man, erect, and out in the open sunshine. He is brother to all the world. There is a great text in Ezekiel that often seems to me significant beyond most. "Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee." The prophet was crouching, groveling in the sand, and there all around him were the scrolls on the wall, the awful symbols of near power and strength, which he had no power to cope with, and his whole attitude was that of the groveling man whose life was over and who had no great hope. That is the last word he has to say to life, when God comes to him, and stands, pauses, looks at him, says, "Stand upon thy feet; take thy life manfully, and look

into the sunshine, and I will have words to say unto thee." There is no situation in this world where the last word that one has to say to life is merely that of sorrow or of resignation. There is a gladder world for every one who, wherever he may be, will stand upon his feet and face the God of gladness.

The means of this change, as the men realized their God, was the gladness that they had had. The Forth Bridge in our country was almost completed, and there was just one rivet wanting, but allowing for the expansion, they had to make their rivets work in slight slots, not absolutely fitting the rivets; and that day they had left the ends of the iron a little apart, calculated to the finest nicety what would be necessary, and it needed a little heat to expand the great bridge so that the last rivet might be shot. And they couldn't get it. They kindled fires. I remember well how fires were kindled until some of the iron beams were red hot here and there. It expanded a little, but it could not get the whole way across until, at last, for about three hours the sun shone out, and then quietly and slowly, and yet fully and effectively, the great irons slid past each other, and the rivet was sent home. All the world's widest gulfs ultimately are bridged by sunshine. It is when men have learned to rejoice in God that they know themselves brothers to the people on the other side of the gulf. Yes, the narrowness of this world is a thing of sorrow very often, and it is to be excused because of that. These generous sentiments, this largeness of heart that has come from the knowledge of the joy of God, is the true key to the brotherhood of man. And I think that gives us a very valuable thought with regard to a great deal of our social effort that is being to-day more and more impressed upon the conscience of the world. The brotherhood of man is a magnificent conception, and there are very many people who are trying to force it, trying to arrange it in different ways; but the secret of it is beyond them; the secret of it is in gladness. It is the great sorrows, poverty, ignorance, disease, superstition, sin,—it is these that keep men apart; but when men are glad all around, glad in their work, in their homes, in their worship, brotherhood becomes inevitable; they cannot help it; and the thing to produce brotherhood in man is to make men all around glad in life and in God.

THE HUMILITY OF JOY.

But let us look in the next place at the *humility of joy*. "It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves." That is changed in the Revised Version slightly, but not essentially. There are people who are missing joy because they forget to be humble enough to be glad. Humility is one of the great secrets of joy, while it does not seem so, and the want of it, a certain pride, is producing a hard, cold sadness upon our time which is produced by nothing else so much. There are some people who are so proud of having made themselves, that they never can manage to be glad at all in life. They are so self-made and proud of it, they are so elated and full of the consciousness of the great work they have done, and the great fight they have made, and the stand against difficulties, that you feel they have saved Providence an enormous responsibility. These people are continually sad. Down below all the self-sufficiency of them, down below all that which seems to be clutching at and making for a great delight in themselves, there is an anxiety that people will not value them at their own worth, and continually they are anxious. The secret of joy for them would be to say, "It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves." It would settle the whole problem of life for them in one sentence.

There are others who rely upon their ancestry, who look upon themselves as heirs of all the ages, and bear the burdens upon their own shoulders of the whole past that has culminated

in them. It would relieve them, too, with a mighty relief, if

"Falling with the weight of cares
Upon the world's great altar stairs,
That led through darkness up to God,"

they would find that He had made them and not their fathers. There is dignity and strength in knowing that you are the handiwork of God. There is the possibility of the future in knowing that He that hath made you hath made you for some purpose. There is love and comfort in being the child of the Father, the Father in heaven. Know it, says the Psalm; know it as an experience, the experience of being possessed, dwelt in, owned by God. The former gods, the idols, had possessed the mere territory, the land. God has His ownership, His possessions, in people, in living souls, and Israel's whole history was just one long succession of acts of grace by her Maker. She was not self elected; He had wrought all her works in her, and I think for humility there is no parallel to the literature of Israel. She, with her conception of such a marvelous destiny, kept for her national figure the shepherd figure—"We are his people, and the flock of his pasture"—and the shepherd, leading out and in his little weak flock.

Sorrow is often proud. When one's soul is smitten, it seems a challenge. One stands back and will take it bravely whatever is to come. But when God visits the soul with gladness, how easy it is to lie back and be humble, and to say, Thy gentleness hath made me great! Yes, and conversely, when one is glad how absolutely humble one becomes. When one's soul is full of joy, there is no room left in it for pride.

THE OUTLOOK OF JOY.

But, lastly, there is the *outlook of joy* here, and that rings a deep note, very deep and far from home to many of us, perhaps, when it comes in the last verse, "For the Lord is good." "The Lord is good," and then from that you look back and forward, standing, as it were, upon the ground of the character of God. What does life look like as you look forward to it, as you look back to it? What is its deepest truth? What are you going to think of it and say for its summary?

You remember Rabbi Ben Ezra:—

"Grow old along with me.
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made:
Our times are in His hand
Who saith, 'A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid.'"

And there is no light-hearted optimism here. It is a solemn retrospect we are having. This was resurrection joy for Israel. She had been having her Calvary, and this joy had come to her from the darkness of her sorrow; but now she remembered no more the anguish for the joy of the new day. And it was not merely that the present was coloring the past and the future bright; it was not merely because she was so glad just now that she was able to think that the past had been better than it was, and the future would be better than she hoped; it was this, that gladness is sanity, that we are made to be glad, and when joy is come our judgment is better. When you are in misery you are not a fair judge of life, and you never yet have taken a fair view of life when you are sad. This is a case of real insight given by conquered sorrow, a far vista seen through the clear air of the resurrection light, showing things as they are.

That is their judgment of life, and why? What is the ground on which the sane man stands when he sees life exactly as it is and takes this judgment? This: that the Lord is good. This happy Psalm appears to use the words of triumph as if there were a shout in it, but I should not wonder if there were a pang in it, too. Think of it. There had been times when it was not easy for Israel to say, "The Lord is good," when she had to fall back upon the character of God and say, "Well, I cannot understand my lot, but the Lord must be good." It is

like the repetition of a thing that has been often said, sometimes in circumstances very different from those in which this Psalm was written.

Yes, and for us this means still more. Have none of you felt the invasion of this present melancholy, that sorrow of the world that comes down upon the heart at times and makes some of our finest literature so bitterly cynical and sad? To-day it hardly startles people who are reading the literature of their time to hear some soul shouting to itself in the darkness, "Yes, but the Lord is good." After all is said, it is not so much our own sorrow that does that for us. It is the sorrows of those we love. When they are hard smitten, unreasonably hard, as it seems, when the great mysterious hands that stretch through the darkness molding men are pressing very hard upon some tender one who needs no such pressure, according to our loving judgment, when the burden and the agony of the times is on us, when in any generous impulses we feel the sorrows that we cannot cure, and fight in vain against the evils of our time, ah, then we know the meaning of that little word, "But the Lord is good." And if one will learn the lesson of this Psalm, it will be to stand upon that firm rock of the character of God, to know it as it is revealed in Jesus Christ until it has made us all strong enough to bear the awful weight of this unintelligible world. Until then you shall find yourself bearing the burden of the world's sin and sorrows on your nerves, and God means it to be borne not on your nerves, but on your shoulders. To go forward to bear the weight of men's sorrow and their sin and agony, to bear the long patience and suffering of life, one needs to be able to stand upon this rock of God's character, "The Lord is good." Until that has gladdened your own atmosphere, and beyond the clouds you see the eternal light and live in it, you are bearing the burden wrongly. Do what you can, my brother; bear your burden, fight your battle, do your life's labor; but keep your head clear, clear enough to remember that deep below all appearances of things the fundamental fact of life is the character of God—"But the Lord is good."

THE USE OF THE BIBLE IN PERSONAL WORK.

Rev. Howard W. Pope.

In doing personal work the first thing is to ascertain the position of the one you are dealing with. This is not always easy, for sin is so subtle, and the human heart so deceitful, that oftentimes the man does not really know his own position. However, you will soon find some clue which you can follow up until the real hiding place is discovered.

For instance, if you meet a man who says, "I am not very bad," it is evident that he is judging himself by a false standard. He is comparing his life with the life of others, and quite likely he has selected the most inconsistent church members whom he happens to know as the standard of comparison. Tried by this standard, and allowing himself to be the judge, he appears to such an advantage that he really sees no reason why he should become a Christian. The course to pursue with this man is to alter the standard of judgment. This can be done by saying, "Perhaps you are not very bad in your own estimation, or even in the estimation of your friends, but let us see what God says about you." Open your Bible at Rom. iii. 10 and let him read the verse, "There is none righteous, no, not one." Give him also Rom. iii. 23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Say to him, "You see that, according to God's standard, you

have come very far short of righteousness, and furthermore, your sins have made it necessary for Christ to die upon the cross, for God says in Isa. liii. 6, 'All we like sheep have gone astray, and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.' 'Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree' (1 Pet. ii. 24). Now when Jesus took your place upon the cross and died for your sins, you refused to acknowledge Him as your Saviour. If that is not bad, what is? There is only one thing worse, and that is to continue rejecting such a Saviour."

Do not bring out these points in a way to cause chagrin, as if you were triumphing over a fallen foe, but in a tender, sympathetic way press these Scripture truths upon him in the form of questions, and then, when he realizes how far he comes short in God's estimation, urge the claims of Christ upon him, and, if possible, lead him to a definite acceptance of Christ as his Saviour then and there.

Under an exterior of seeming indifference or apparent skepticism, one will often find a tender spot which opens readily to the touch of sympathy. Not long ago I met a stranger whose main defence was the inconsistency of Christians. He had neighbors who were Christians and they were very mean and disagreeable. I said, "You must remember that it is not their religion which makes them mean, but the lack of it." "Well, I suppose that is so," he replied, as if a new idea had struck him. As he seemed utterly indifferent, I said, "Well, my friend, you may not feel the need of a Saviour now, but the time will surely come when you will need Him." At once his attitude changed and he replied: "I don't know but I need Him now. I lost my wife a year ago, and my daughter has just died, and really I am all alone in the world." I said, "My dear man, you do need a Saviour if anyone does," and I began to hold up Christ as the present help in time of trouble, and I then told him how glad Jesus would be to come into his heart and life and abide with him forever. I explained to him just what it was to become a Christian, and in a few moments he said, "I will accept Christ as my Saviour," and there in the midst of a surging crowd we had a little prayer meeting, and this man, who a few moments before was pointing out the faults of others, now told the Lord of his own sins and asked forgiveness in Jesus' name.

A very common excuse is this, "I am afraid I cannot hold out." It is evident that this man is thinking of trying to save himself, and the first thing to do is to get his mind off from himself, and to fix it upon the One Who alone can do the saving. Say to him, "You are quite right in thinking you cannot hold out, but let us see what God thinks about the matter." Open your Bible at Heb. vii. 25 and let him read, "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Show him that this is an uttermost salvation which God offers and that it surely covers his case. If he refers to the possibility of falling, turn at once to Jude 24, where God says, "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling [Revised Version, stumbling,] and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." If he says that his temptations are peculiar, and every sinner is conceited enough to fancy that his temptations are a little more trying than anyone else ever had, tell him that God has provided for them abundantly, and open your Bible at 1 Cor. x. 13 where he will read: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man. But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Then, gathering up all these arguments, show him that God says distinctly that He is able to save him unto the uttermost, able to keep him from stumbling, and, knowing just how much he can endure, God guarantees that no temptation shall be allowed to come near him which he is not able to bear, and if temptation is ever necessary as a discipline (and it is to all at times), He promises a sure door of escape. If the man is at all sincere there is only one alternative, and that is to kneel down and commit his soul to the care of Him Who is well able to keep it. Again and again I have seen people who honestly were afraid to venture upon the Christian life for fear of failure, break down under

this accumulation of Scripture, and gladly commit their lives to the only Saviour from sin. If you argue with a man you make but little progress, because if you drive him from one position he retires to another. If you tell him your experience he replies that his case is different, but when you meet his excuses with God's Word his mouth is shut; there is no argument against that.

Remember that Jesus came into the world to seek and to save the lost, and He will save some of them through you, if you will let Him do it. Remember that all your inexperience and fancied inability amount to nothing in the face of His express command, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Remember that the Holy Spirit is all the time convicting people of sin, and Providence is continually softening hard hearts, and thousands have never in all their lives had a direct personal invitation to accept Jesus as their Saviour, accompanied by a simple explanation of the way to do it. We take too much for granted in supposing that those who have heard the gospel all their lives know how to become Christians. It is not so. Indeed the majority of those who are members of our churches cannot explain to another how to become a Christian. Hence, if a person shows any degree of interest in the subject of personal religion, never fail to make plain to him just what he needs to do in order to become a Christian, and then press home his plain and unmistakable duty.

New Haven, Conn.

DEATH OF MR. JOHN KENSIT.

Tidings of the death of Mr. John Kensit, who for some years has been the dauntless leader of the anti-ritualistic crusade in England, have just been received. On September 25, while in Birkenhead, near Liverpool, where he was holding meetings, someone in the crowd struck him with a chisel. Mr. Kensit was taken to the hospital for treatment. Pneumonia supervened from the wound and on October 8 he passed away. His son, Mr. John A. Kensit, who is undergoing a sentence of three months' imprisonment for refusing to give up the holding of meetings in the interests of anti-ritualism, was allowed by the Home Secretary to visit his father under police escort the day before his death.

It is some seven years since Mr. Kensit, a London bookseller, first came into prominence in connection with this movement. He flooded the metropolis and many of the provincial towns with pamphlets denouncing ritualism in the Church of England and showing up the evils of the confessional, which was being introduced by many of the clergy. On one occasion at St. Cuthbert's Church, London, when what is known as the "Veneration of the Cross" formed part of the service in which the whole congregation, headed by the clergy and acolytes, go up in pairs to the steps of the altar to kiss the crucifix, Mr. Kensit, advancing with the rest suddenly seized it, shouting, "In the name of God, I denounce this idolatry, and Popery in the Church of England." For this action he was arrested.

In Mr. Kensit Protestantism in England has lost an able supporter. His methods may not always have been the wisest, but he had the courage of his convictions, and has given his life for the cause he so nobly championed.

Bible Teachers School. The New York Bible Teachers Training School opened the second week in October in the chapel of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian church. Among the lecturers and instructors announced, besides Dr. W. W. White, the president, are the Rev. Drs. A. F. Schauffler, R. W. Rogers of the Drew Theological Seminary, D. S. Gregory, James M. Gray of Boston, Mr. Robert E. Speer, Miss Caroline M. Holmes, principal of the Training School for Christian Workers, Miss Caroline M. Palmer, and the Rev. George Soltau, an English minister.

THOSE BLACK DIAMOND WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

William Futhey Gibbons.

The EDITOR asks me to say something about the effects of the great anthracite coal strike upon the families and homes of the miners,—upon the helpless and innocent victims of one of the greatest struggles in the industrial history of our country. It is not my purpose, therefore, to discuss the right or wrong of the strike, nor even to set down the causes remote or immediate which led to this unhappy warfare, but simply to tell the truth as I have seen it concerning those who have none to speak for them.

The fact that there is not absolute starvation in the coal regions after five months of idleness speaks volumes. For nearly a year before the strike was declared both the companies and the miners were preparing for the coming conflict. From the wages received during the good times the women laid by a surplus. A miner's wife is usually his banker and because her husband is shut up under ground she attends to most of his business for him. The reserve fund accumulated has not all been hidden in the trunks and stockings of the housewives. Many of the women had opened accounts in the savings banks. Now practically all these accounts have been withdrawn. A year ago the Lackawanna Trust Company gave out some three thousand "branch savings banks"; two thousand four hundred of which have now been returned and the accounts closed. This surplus has been the women's contribution to the strike to keep want from their homes for these five months.

Another fact which has postponed the day of want is that there are in many cases some members of the strikers' families who are at work. In many districts there are silk mills or factories, in which the girls of the family find employment. Under ordinary circumstances, especially in the families of the foreigners, girls are not regarded as a blessing. Indeed there is almost an oriental contempt for women, because they cannot work in the mines. Like

THE "HOME, SWEET HOME" OF THE MINERS.

a "dead Hunkie" (Hungarian) the girls are voted "no good." But now the support of many a family devolves upon some slip of a girl.

There has been a very general effort made to provide work for the men. Various public works have been started, such as sewers and the grading of streets, while the new cannon ball electric railroad has provided work for hundreds in one section of the coal-fields. While some of the men have found work near home and while most of the single men have gone away from home to seek work in the soft coal regions or elsewhere, the great majority of course are still idle. Some of these do not want employment. The wife of such a man in a certain village was recently applying for money to buy shoes for her children. The man from whom she was asking aid was a contractor. He replied rather gruffly: "You oughtn't to be begging when your husband is able to work. Send him to me; I'll give him work for $1.25 a day. Where is he?"

"It 's no use to offer him that," she replied dejectedly. "Do you see that gang of men up there in the field? He 's up there telling the fellows to hold out a little longer, because they 've got the companies licked.'"

One of the occupations in which crowds of people are engaged at the present time is the picking of coal from the culm dumps. Many a family has a cellar or yard stored with coal enough to last through the winter, and some have even picked coal to sell. The pickers are about evenly divided between men and women. Sometimes it is the children who do the work. Where the whole family works together, the man will dig into the gigantic heap of culm (for the surface has been picked clean long ago), his wife will sift what he throws out from his burrow in the loose rock and dust, while the children break up the larger lumps with hammers and sack up the product. If the family is Italian the mother will carry home on her head as much as two or three bushels of coal, while her "man" contents himself with one sack on his shoulder. In the families of English-speaking miners, the man provides himself with a wheelbarrow. Recently I counted seventy-two persons on one dump engaged in gathering coal in this way. The steep sides of the mountain of coal dirt were criss-crossed in every direction by the feet of prospectors for coal and striated with channels down which the bags of coal have been slid to the path below.

CULM-DUMP PICKERS.

A favorite place for obtaining coal is from the bottom of the rivers and streams that rush through the mountainous coal regions. The specific gravity of coal is higher than that of the rocks and shales of the region, so that a freshet will collect coal in the eddies and upon the shoals of the streams. After a flood scores of women from the settlements of the "foreigners" —Poles, Italians, Lithuanians, etc.,—are to be seen fishing for coal, often wet to the waist all day long. This I have seen, even since the cold autumn rains have fallen.

One of the ways in which the women and children have supported themselves during the summer was by the picking of blueberries. This is always a source of revenue, but this year as never before berries have been shipped from the various express offices. Hundreds of tons have actually been shipped from the mountain regions, for which the patient pickers have been paid five or six cents per quart.

As has already been said, many of the men have left the coal fields to seek work elsewhere. These have been sending back money to the families left behind. After pay days the post offices are kept busy paying postal notes. In the last four months the post office in Scranton, which is the distributing office for the northern coal field, has paid out more than fifty thousand dollars over and above its receipts. Draft after draft has been made on New York to meet the drain, but in spite of all this

A Street in Slav Town.

there have been times when the United States government, as represented by the money order department of the postoffice in some coal mining hamlets, has been bankrupt—until more money could be brought in.

Immediately after the strike was declared the pawnbrokers' shops began to advertise alluringly and then to follow up with their agents. While there may not be as great an increase in their business as the flood of circulars would indicate, yet many a woman, who never saw the inside of such a place before, has stolen into a pawnshop, shamefaced and tearful. Already the community staggers under a weight of debt and mortgages which it will take years of good times to wipe out.

The poor boards of the various counties have done nothing to supply the great gap in the resources of the people. When the strike was first declared, notice was given immediately that no aid would be granted to those who could obtain work in the mines, whether members of the union or not, but who preferred to be idle with the strikers.

Then there is the "relief" granted by the union, in which the women and children bulk large but the amount pitifully small, $2.50 for a man and his wife and thirty-five cents for each child. This is given in the shape of checks on certain store-keepers for food-supplies and the amount is supposed to provide for two weeks. Clothing and house-rent are not provided for. Neither the coal companies nor private landlords have shown any disposition to distress their tenants for the non-payment of rent. Such is the system of relief through the union; but when this pittance shall cease, then let the world know that there will be want, sharp and immediate, which will tax to the utmost all the charitable agencies, both public and private.

At this time, September 29, there does not seem on the surface of things an unusual degree of poverty. But the hospitals and various charitable institutions are filled and the visitors of the charity organizations report frequent cases of destitution. A physician in a town where the troops are quartered told me of a case to which he had been called where the woman was dying shortly after the birth of a child. The cause of her death was insufficient food.

The facts seem to be that the miners and their families are holding out with the grim determination to die rather than to give up the struggle or to let their needs be known. While there may not have been much suffering up to this time, there are evidently many who are very near to want. If the relief granted by the union should fail and bitter winter weather begin, an appalling amount of suffering must ensue.

Dunmore, Pa.

Church Congress. As we go to press the Twenty-first Church Congress in the United States is convened in Albany (Oct. 14-15). Many of the topics chosen for discussion are of present political and economic interest and the writers and speakers who will discuss them are prominently known and recognized as authorities on the questions assigned to them. The congress opens at 10:30 A. M., with the celebration of the Holy Communion and an address by Bishop Burgess, the lately elected Diocesan of Long Island. At 8 P. M. an address of welcome is to be delivered by Bishop Doane of Albany, which will be followed by the discussion of the topic, "The Church and the Drama," by the Rev. Dr. Henry Lubeck of Manhattan, the Rev. Dr. Floyd W. Tomkins of Philadelphia, the Rev. A. B. Kinsolving of Brooklyn, and the Rev. W. E. Bentley of Manhattan.

PARK COLLEGE, MO.

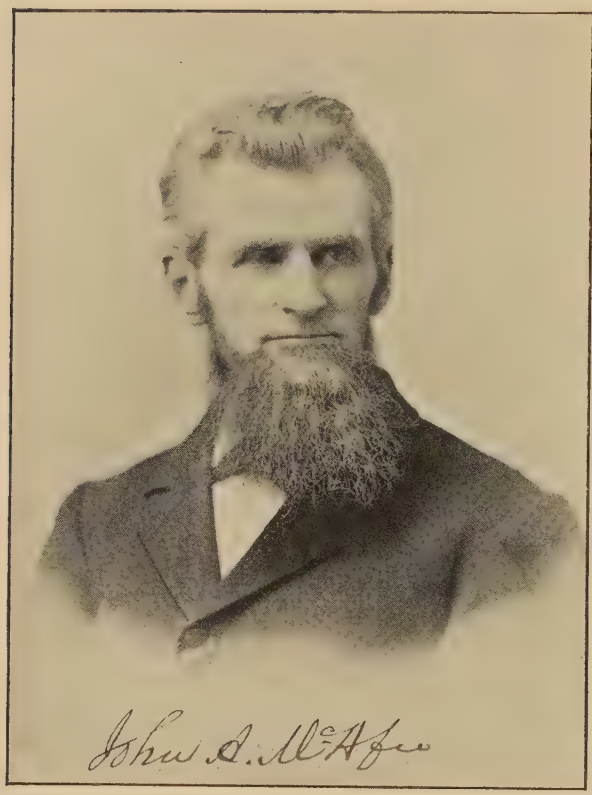
By One of Her Sons.

PARK COLLEGE.

Park College is a product of faith and works. Now all true human work results from the combination of these two. In an especial sense Park College is from both. God spoke and the man, believing that it was God's voice, obeyed implicitly. The founder studied the records of college builders in various ages; he poured over the accounts of more than one faith enterprise; he listened for God's direction and went in the path indicated. He went with all his earth advisers, save one, against him. He did not work in quietness waiting for the Master to send in the day's supplies, but he deemed it to be his great duty to tell God's people what God was doing and what the needs of the work were. For many years a weekly publication, letter and paper, has gone out to thousands of readers. It has at times been merely the record of events; it has been filled with strongest appeals for help. No apology is made for its requests for gifts, for it is a part of the direction given that the church shall be trained in doing the Master's work. God reveals His way variously: some of His work appears to be on a commercial basis purely, other rests on Him without even the appearance of earth support. Between these two stands Park College. With a trust in his God worthy of the most confiding child the founder waited upon Him; with equal devotion he went to his Christian co-workers and told of need and asked for help.

Slowly at the first and more speedily in later times it has grown. All men said that the scheme was one of folly at its first unfolding; in its days of assured success its friends multiply. In brief, the plan was the organization of a great family. Its members were to be mutually helpful in the securing of an education. All were to share alike, none being favored because of better attainments, mental, financial or physical. They were to be those who were debarred from attendance upon other colleges for want of money. They were to work and as nearly as possible to attain self-support. They were to keep high the classical standard but the Bible was ever to be the chief text book. Two men, but one in life and heart, at the first stood alone with God; then came the coöperation of one; then the loyal support of several followed; then increasing helpfulness from many pressed forward; this is the history of dark days and of light. God magnified Himself all the while and in one room, the one sacred to prayer, light always shone.

In common usage the term Park College is a compound one: it means a college course and self-help. On the campus the term is not so. If you were in Parkville you would soon learn to distinguish between "College" and Family." Park College, the term used strictly, is very little different from other Christian colleges which are true to their names. Its classical course is of high grade, its students easily passing from its classes into those of exactly the same rank in America's leading colleges and universities. Electives are few that full emphasis may



THE FOUNDER OF PARK COLLEGE.

be put upon the one course of development. The faculty is carefully chosen and regularly increasing. Its students come from boarding houses, private homes and from the dormitories occupied by the Family. In the class rooms all these meet on one level. In the chapel all assemble with leading text book in hand: there songs rise with good volume and harmony, prayer receives hearty response from silent hearts, wise and practical comments make the Bible lesson something other than theory.

Park College Family is the unique part of the double institution. Its first head, he who under the Divine leadership founded it and guided it for a decade and a half, was in training for that work from childhood. In his boyhood he marshalled the little negroes out in the quarters; in youth he mastered the hardness and the mysteries of the pioneer's farm life; in full manhood he took his college course, working with his own hands, teaching the country school, tutoring; the bachelor's degree his, he was professor, principal and president. Westminster College, Missouri, for student days; Fulton Female Seminary and Watson Seminary, both in Missouri, for principal's training; Pardee College, Missouri, and Highland University, Kansas, for development in president's duties; then in 1875 Park College.

In that year in an old river town two men met whose hearts burned with the same desire, the desire of helping those who like themselves had to battle for educational privilege. One had house and lands, the other had experience and a Divine call for active leadership. Together they prayed and planned, together they watched developments, almost together they went home, passing the work on to others.

In Park College Family the aim of being as nearly self-supporting as possible is maintained. Pupils have the satisfaction of being less dependent on parental and Christian benevolence there than in any other of the church schools. Some work four and a half hours each day; some have one hour less for manual labor; those who give the shortest hours to this form of athletics are at work three hours each day of the six. No pupil anywhere can be absolutely self-supporting. Here a few pay part expenses in money; others pay little and the many pay nothing. In all cases ability is carefully inquired into. Large farms yield their opportunities for profitable student work. Pastures are covered with flocks and herds, and students give them their care. Shops are filled with their usual appliances and turn out their various products; in them students are apprentices and skilled workmen. Offices with bookkeepers, stenographers, messengers and printers are hives of student activity. In homes, dormitories, lecture halls and chapel are to be found all needed janitors,

dish-washers, cooks and caretakers. From this work they go to recitation, to contest, to experiment, and finally to graduation platform. About some of this there is a glamor and at times romance, but in the main there is hard work merely. Blisters and greasy wrinkles are prose, with no suggestion of poetry. Yet all this work in honorable and in Park College Family it is dignified. No one loses caste because of any honest work, and men go into life with correct ideas and women are ready for women's work.

One day some visitors were being taken about the institution. They were asked to note the clothing and the heavy work of one who seemed to be only a laborer. They expressed astonishment when they were told that he was the one whose fine class room work they had admired in the forenoon. He was attending a mason, he mixed the mortar and carried the hod. He mastered highest mathematics and hard construction of dead languages; he delighted in science and literature. He is to-day in Africa as missionary and all-round leader. He easily changed from blue overalls to senior's dress in a day. He thought it no disgrace to lay down orator's pen that he might grasp mixer's hoe-handle, that thus he might do all in his power toward being self-supporting. Thus faith and works are forever combining in Park College. "Fides et labor" is on the great seal of the college. That same legend is writ on her sons and daughters as well as on all her history.

The first class to receive the Arts degree was that of 1879. The Family's first work was in April of 1875. The college charter bears the same date as her first class. No year has failed of its class, though it has varied in number from the three of 1881 to the more than forty of recent years. The alumni thus enrolls hundreds of men and women who are a blessing to the world and who now rise up to call her blessed from whom they received their training for service. The great army of non-graduates who have had to leave college walls is an honor to Park College, second only to the graduating class.

The output is in all the world. They are blessing many a home circle, they are healing the sick and nursing as well, they are in teachers' chairs in all grades of institutions, they are ministers, lawyers, business men, missionaries, farmers, soldiers, legislators. In short, Park College points to all honest walks of life and singles out her representatives.

All graduates have acknowledged the Divine right over them and over their lives. Rarely has a pupil remained in college or academy so much as one year without becoming a Christian, yet no questions are asked as to profession of belief when an application is filed. One pledge is asked of all whose names are entered upon any roll and that is that Bible study shall be a part of each day's duty.

To-day the enrollment is that of years past—in round numbers four hundred students are on those hills. The limit is set not from choice, but because of dormitory accommodations. One stage of the life was existence; then came the gaining possession of lands by purchase; then the building was done; now developing of resources, beautifying of the grounds, furnishing of buildings, with the regular work of maintenance of the great family engage all time and money. Soon there must be enlargement. The Master's work is calling for many new recruits. Each year applicants are turned away from the Family, yet these are the very material needed to be trained for the varied work which calls for equipped leaders. There are well qualified men in the faculty, reliable helpers in the Family, and expert superintendents in the various lines of industrial work. These might care for an increased number of students, and they will gladly do so as soon as provision can be made for that increase to be housed.

The Spirit of God prevails in the institution. Consecration of a high order is constant. That the Master may be pleased is the eager wish of Family and College, both in the student body and in the leaders of thought and activity.

With glad thanksgiving as the past is viewed, Park College faces the future confidently and eagerly.

An Island of the Pacific.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPICS.

Ida Q. Moulton.

THE BEST GIFT.

(November 2, 1 Corinthians xii. 28-31; xiii. 1-13.)

Love is what we are, therefore it is the best gift to possess. Love is the only thing that abides, therefore it is the best gift to covet. Love is the only gift which includes all other gifts, therefore it is the best gift to cultivate. Love exerts the widest influence, therefore it is the most important gift. "Nothing is sweeter than love, nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing broader, nothing more pleasant, nothing better, either in heaven or on earth, because love is born of God and rising above all created things can find its rest in Him alone," for "God is love." "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward the other and toward all men."

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The lesser gifts as summarized by Paul in his letter to the Corinthians, are given to different persons in different degrees, but the greatest gift is given to all, and all can reach perfection in that gift, for by it all can be useful in God's service and eminent for their holy living. Let us embody this gift in our lives, exercise it upon our kindred, friends and neighbors, yea, even upon our enemies, for "by serving love will grow." It will lead us up to heights not yet attained, to a life of unselfishness of which we have not yet dreamed. Oh, that we may not only covet this best gift, but be possessed of it!

* * * * *

It is a great and good thing to love Christ well enough to die for Him, but it is the greatest and best thing to love Him well enough to live for Him. Away with the religion that professes to love God, and then murmurs over the crosses and burdens of daily life. Away with that Christianity which would rather die and be at rest than live and suffer for Jesus' sake. Away with that fanciful love which sings, "I am His and He is mine," and then like the priest and Levite passes by on the other side. Awake, O weak heart, to a true sense of the importance of living a loving life. Court not death. Put on the whole armor and stand ready to *live,* for our Beloved lives with us.

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A mother who frequently left her home for a few days at a time, used to bring each of the children a little gift. One day she purposely neglected the gifts. The little ones met her in the hall with expectant faces; "I did not bring you any presents this time," said the mother, "because —." "We don't care, mamma dear, you are the bestest present," said one little one. Can we say to Christ, "Thou art the best gift, Thou art all in all to me; there is nothing upon earth I desire besides Thee; I would rather have Thee than any earthly gift"? If we can, then we are ready to give Him any or all our earthly gifts, even a loved one; then we are willing to take from Him any gift, even a thorny cross, and carry it for His sake.

GOD'S COVENANT AND OURS; PLEDGE MEETING.

(November 9, Exodus xxiv. 3-8.)

Michael Angelo worked with a candle fastened to the brim of his pasteboard cap so his shadow would not fall upon his work. So let us bear about with us in our daily lives (and when we serve on the different committees) the spirit of our pledge, which is entire consecration. Let no thought of self enter into the service we strive to do in Jesus' name and for His dear sake. If we do this, the connection between the pledge and the source of power will ever remain unbroken. Others will be inspired to a more faithful keeping of the pledge and souls will be led into the kingdom through our self-forgetful service, for this is the acme of our pledge taking and pledge keeping.

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There is no necromancy in the pledge itself, but there is a certain indefinable charm about those who keep it. An invisible halo seems to surround those who enter into

such close relationship with Christ as is outlined in the pledge, for the loving spirit of the Master enters into them. There is no more attractive power to mortals given, no greater charm than the power which goes out from a loving heart. The purpose of the pledge is to implant in our hearts this principle of divine human love which was perfected in Christ. He that hath this love in his heart has its source also, accompanied with the power to do *whatever* He would like to have us do.

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Think of the privilege of entering into a covenant with the most high God, coming together with Him and agreeing upon a certain line of action. How simple the conditions are; covered by one word, obedience. This is the foundation stone for every covenant pledge or vow. It is what the bed of the river is to the waters which now flow quietly over it or boil and seethe above it. Keeping the Christian Endeavor pledge! Why, the pledge keeps us, by guiding us along the path of duty. It tells us to pray, to read the Bible, to bear testimony, to be loyal to our church, and to live like Christians. Obedience to its requirements, even by letter, will lead us on to a fuller obedience by spirit. "By obeying its precepts myriads of young people have been led into the school of prayer. It has given youth 'The gift of the knees whereby they have received the gift of power.'"

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The power of the will is the greatest force in human nature. There are also two other strong forces within us, natural inclinations tending downward, and spiritual desires tending upward. Whatever weakens the will towards wrong action should be avoided, for natural desire ever sits near a will that wills to do wrong. Whatever strengthens the will should be sought after, for spiritual attainments ever hover above a will that wills to do right. It is unquestionably true that pledges or vows strengthen and fix our determinations, whether they be good or ill. Mr. Moody once said, "It doesn't take much of a man to be a Christian, but it takes all there is of him," and we might add, he needs all the help he can get.

Seneca once advised his friend Lucilius to imagine some great, quick-sighted, clear-brained man like Cato as continually looking upon him, that he might be kept up to his full duty. If we would be kept up to the full duty of our pledge we must be ever conscious of the presence of Jesus, for our pledge is to Him—not to our pastor, church, or Christian Endeavor Society. Our union with Him will be blest to each just so far as we are true and faithful to that vow. If we do not receive from this union all we expected, we have failed in trusting.

FOR ME.

(November 16, Isaiah liii. 6; Luke xxii. 19, 20; Romans v. 6-8; 1 John iii. 16.)

The test of our appreciation of what Christ's death upon the cross brought us, is found in what our lives bring Him. Not many are called to shed their blood upon the cross, but all are called to shed a holy life upon those around them. Would you, O Christian, have the high honor of being crucified with Christ? Then live for others. Away with self, the center of sin. Murmur not at tribulation, shrink not from suffering, be not cast down by hardships. Christ's life was one long dying atonement for our sins. Let our lives be one long living appreciation of that atonement. Let the manner in which we bear our crosses of disappointment and sorrow be a living testimony of our love to the One Who died upon the cross for us.

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The history of Rome has a legend like this. A great chasm opened in the middle of the Forum. The Roman authorities sought in every way to fill it. They consulted a soothsayer, who told them it would never close till it contained what Rome most valued. A youth of noble birth hearing this asked, "Has Rome anything of more value than arms and men?" Then with face calm and serene he mounted his horse and spurred him over the precipice and the chasm closed. God looked into the awful chasm of sin that separated the world from Himself. The Son standing by said, "Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt," and submitting Himself to the ignominious cross, filled the chasm with His precious blood.

"O! wondrous is the crimson tide
Which from my Saviour flowed
And still in heaven my song shall be
The precious, precious blood."

* * * * *

Our love to God corresponds exactly to our estimation of our sins. "To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." If we are not deeply conscious of the heinousness of sin neither can we be deeply conscious of what it is to love God. If we think lightly of sin, we shall also think lightly of our Saviour. Abhorrence of sin is the tap root from which our love to God grows, and the deeper down our hatred for sin goes the higher up our love will ascend. If my love to God is not the mainspring of my life it is because "sin is not the recognized sorrow of my life." May God help us to look upon sin with the same abhorrence that He does; then will that love which is in Him be in us also.

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It is related of General Garibaldi that one night when returning home with some of his troops, he met a shepherd hunting for a lost lamb. Immediately the general turned to his troops and said, "I go to search for the lamb." Officers and men followed his example. They searched for hours, but no lamb was found. When the general's attendant went to call him the next morning he found him with the little lamb tucked under the covering, both fast asleep. After the general had ordered his men to sleep he had kept up the search till the lamb was found. This is but a mere suggestion of what Christ will do for the sheep that goes astray. It is not His will that one of us should perish (Matt xviii. 12-14).

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"For me." Oh, the preciousness of those two words! How they thrill us. They are indeed "the nerve of the Christian's life."

"For me!" the bad, without one claim, and yet He died for me. Weak, foolish, wayward, oft-defiled, yet mysterious as it may seem, He laid down His life for me. None but the Son of God could stoop so low. Because He is what He is He stooped to such as I am. Slow to learn I am, dull to hear, rendering such feeble service, seeking to please self instead of Him, and yet He loves me well enough not alone to save me, but to keep me saved, calling me, even me, "My child." What more do I need to keep this heart content? What greater bliss could I enjoy than the pure, tender, forgiving love of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour?

THANKSGIVING AND THANKSLIVING.

(November 23, Psalm cxvi. 12-17; James i. 27.)

It has aptly been said, "Ingratitude is the devil's sponge with which he blots out from memory the favors that God has shown us." It is but a form of selfishness which, like the fabled magic skin, compressed the wearer into smaller dimensions every time it was worn and at last crushed the life out. It is a Dead Sea in our hearts, continually taking in, never giving out, causing our lives to grow more and more bitter instead of sweeter and sweeter. It is a great thing to be grateful, not alone for the gift, but to the giver. What we need in our religion is not new benefits, but a new sense to realize the most common blessings. Not new talents for the Master's use, but a new vision to see how to use the old; not new mercies, but new gratitude. Ingratitude is the atmosphere of hell, poisoning our soul, and causing us to wilt as a flower that has no water. "It is more blessed (to us) to give than to receive."

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The leader of a great musical festival threw up his baton and cried out, "Flageolet." The flageolet was silent and in that great volume of music the conductor missed its one note. Is the world missing a living song of gratitude in your life? O believer, it has a right to expect it! Is God missing the note of heart-felt praise from your lips? He also has a right to expect it. What overwhelming reasons we have for rendering unto others a cheerful, loving life, and unto God the praises due His dear name.

"Our harp tones should be sweeter, our trumpet tones more clear,
Our anthems ring so grandly that all the world must hear!
Oh, royal be our music, for who has cause to sing
Like the chorus of redeemed ones, the children of the King?"

A mother was riding along a thickly wooded road. It was getting dark and her three little ones with her began to be afraid. "Look up and see who can count the most stars," said the mother. "Two hundred and twenty-five," said one, "and I haven't counted half of them." "Two hundred and sixty-five," said the other; "I didn't know there were so many." "Seventy-one! what a great big lot of stars God has got," said the little one of the flock. Weary traveler, is your way getting dark? Do you feel difficulties on either side pressing hard upon you? Are you losing faith? Look up and count your mercies. You have not yet seen even half of them. There are more than you yet know of, and God has "a great big lot," not for a favored few, but for all who walk in His ways.

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"What shall I render?" Obedience first of all, not the obedience that simply permits the will of God to be done in our lives, but the loving, grateful obedience that praises God, because He loves us enough to do His will in them. We are so apt to obey Him as if granting Him a favor instead of receiving one from Him. Our relation to Him is that of recipients, not benefactors. Let us not forget that it is only through the great love He has for us that the privilege of obedience is given us. The truest, purest and highest obedience is saturated by equal parts of gratitude and love. This is the kind that enters into our daily life. This is the kind that will draw men unto Him. Is it yours?

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The connecting link between thanksgiving and thanksliving is the power of the Holy Spirit. No eye beholds the wire of the submerged ocean cable, but the messages transmitted across that wire prove that it exists. No eye beholds the workings of the Holy Spirit, but the results seen in the lives of those connected with Him prove conclusively that He is there. Truth perfected dwells in Him, therefore He does not deal with vain repetitions. He is the heart-power of heaven; therefore He deals with the human heart, and He will give us just as much power as we give Him heart gratitude. If our praise is not answered by newer and sweeter songs, if our petitions are not granted by a purer and better life, our connection with Him has become magnetized by some form of selfishness.

MISSIONS. A MEETING IN THE INTERESTS OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

"THE WORLD FOR CHRIST."

(November 30, Isaiah xlv. 12, 23.)

The genuineness of a heathen's conversion is proved by the disposition he makes of his idols. Is it not also true that the genuineness of our conversion is proved in the same way? For whatever our idols are, be they one or many, large or small, they hinder the cause of Christ. We sing with great vehemency, "Christ for the world, the world for Christ," then sit down and worship by our self indulgence the means that will bring these two together. Yes, let us pity the heathen devotee bowing to his idols of wood and stone, but let us also pity ourselves as we bow to the universal idol of Christian nations—the god Mammon. Away with all such songs and professions until we do away with that which makes our songs and words fall empty and void upon the One Whom we profess to follow!

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When Captain Dreyfus was imprisoned on Devil's Island, the world marveled at the efforts made by his devoted wife to be with him. She was willing to sacrifice everything, submit to the same discipline, and endure the same hardships as he did if she could only be near him. Let such a spirit of devotion, love and self-sacrifice as was shown in Madame Dreyfus for her husband enter into our hearts for Christ, and the world would be His in a single decade. There is so much talking of self-sacrifice and love, that there is little time left to do either, and the world is getting tired of the talk about both. Oh, if our hold upon Christ were as firm as our hold upon the world, what wonders we could do in His name! With aching hearts we cry, "When will this be?" The answer comes, "When My people awake, put on their strength and obey My commands."

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"All the ends of the earth." Think of

the oceans and continents those words sweep over. Think of the sin, misery and degradation in islands of the seas, and the countries on the continents. Think of the calls that come to you from those lands where the Sun of Righteousness has not yet risen. Think of the millions that every year enter graves darkened by superstition and idolatry. If you can think of all these things and remain unmoved, God pity you. A tremendous responsibility is yours, for to you the light has come and the command is given. Christ is ready to go with you, yea, even before you. Will you not say,—

"I will go. I may no longer doubt to give up friends
And idle hopes and every tie that binds my heart to thee, my country:
Henceforth, then, it matters not if storm or sunshine
Be my earthly lot, bitter or sweet my cup, I only pray,
'God make me holy, and my spirit true for the stern hour of strife.'"

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"The story of Christian missions," said the late President McKinley, "is one of thrilling interest and marvelous results. The sacrifices of the missionaries for their fellowmen constitute one of the most glorious pages of the world's history. The noble, self-effacing, willing ministers of peace and good will should be classed with the world's heroes. Wielding the sword of the spirit, they have conquered ignorance and prejudice. They have been the pioneers of civilization. They have braved disease and danger and death, and in their exile have suffered unspeakable hardships, but their noble spirits have never wavered. They furnish us examples of forbearance and fortitude, of patience and unyielding purpose, and of a spirit which triumphs not by force of might, but by the majesty of right."

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Peculiar food in abundance with a larger space to grow in transforms a worker honey bee into a queen bee. The transformation wrought in the heart of a Christian when possessed by the missionary spirit is equally as great. Our hopes grow grander, ideas broader, aspirations higher, our talents multiply, service becomes a privilege, our lives become holier and sweeter, and we cease to talk of self-denial and self-sacrifice. We constantly discover new truths in the Word of God and prayer becomes the inspiration of our lives. How can it be otherwise when the missionary spirit is the spirit of Christ?

"If Christians like their Lord will be
All men will lose their doubts, and see
How real is Christianity:
What do they see in you and me?"

Thoughts for the Quiet Hour.

NOVEMBER, 1902.

Saturday, 1st. *That they be not hindered. Ezra vi. 8.*

A trolley-car passenger was looking at a massive steel structure rapidly nearing completion on the most crowded thoroughfare of a city. "That's a wonderful building!" remarked the car conductor, noticing the passenger's interest. "It is indeed," answered the latter, thinking the reference was to the magnitude and the rapidity of the work. "Yes, it's a wonderful building," went on the conductor,—"the most wonderful I've ever seen. Why, they've been building that now for three months, and they've never once blocked the cars!" The thought underlying that keen observation might well be brought to bear on all our activities. It is this,—Be careful lest your work interferes with others as it progresses. Is the work you are mapping out for yourself to-day, to-morrow, this winter, going to block the tracks for other faithful toilers? Have you taken every possible precaution to prevent such a blockade? If not, your work will fail at an important point. —*Henry Clay Trumbull.*

Sunday, 2nd. *Ye are not your own . . . . ye are bought with a price. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.*

Our personal life must rest firmly on this recognition of Jesus Christ as Lord of life. Each one must learn to say truthfully for himself what Paul says for us all: "I am not my own. I belong to Christ . . . ." This truth of the utter ownership of Jesus is to be the starting-point and the goal of all true life among Christ's disciples, young and old.

Two things become clear at once when Jesus is thus recognized as Proprietor of our personal life. One is that all we have —life, time, talent, possession—is committed to us as a trust from Jesus, not to be used selfishly for ourselves; but unselfishly for Christ and for others. The other is that Jesus is our absolute Lord, our King, our unqualified Emperor. It will be our zeal to exalt Him, to claim for Him first place in other lives, and to yield Him preëminence in our own.—*Robert E. Speer.*

Monday, 3rd. *Jesus said . . . . Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her. Luke x. 41, 42.*

It is better to do a little with prayer and in the spirit, than to be busy with many things in our own strength.—*Andrew Bonar.*

Tuesday, 4th. *Abba, Father, ... take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt. Mark xiv. 36.*

To stand with a smile upon your face, against a stake from which you cannot get away—that, no doubt, is heroic. But true glory is not resignation to the inevitable. To stand unchained, with perfect liberty to go away, held only by the higher claims of duty, and let the fire creep up to the heart —this is heroism.—*F. W. Robertson.*

Wednesday, 5th. *I love the* LORD. *Psalms cxvi. 1.*

Say not, "I love the Lord," unless you find
Within you, welling up by day and night,
A love, strong, full, and deep for human kind;
Unless you find it always a delight
To show the weary one a resting place,
To show the doubting one faith's shining way,
To show the erring one the Door of Grace,
To show the sorrowing ones where they may lay
Their broken hearts, the heaviness, the care,
The grief, the agony too sharp to bear.
When each man is the neighbor whom we love
According to the gracious measure of His Word,
Then may we lift our eyes to heaven above,
And say with rapture sweet, "I love the Lord."

—*Selected.*

Thursday, 6th. *That your joy may be full. 1 John i. 4.*

Joy is the flower and fruit of faith, but faith is not dead because the flower falls off sometimes; joy of necessity wears itself away, and the springs of its renewal are not in us but in Christ, and we must go out of ourselves to find them.—*Mark Guy Pearse.*

Friday, 7th. *The* LORD . . . . *said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house. Gen. xii. 1.*

God . . . . said unto . . . . Abraham . . . . Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac whom thou lovest . . . . and offer him . . . for a burnt offering. Gen. xxii. 1, 2.

God graduates the trials of our life; He allows the lesser to precede the greater. He gives us the opportunity of learning to trust Him in slighter difficulties, that faith may become muscular and strong, and that we may be able to walk to Him amid the surge of the ocean.—*F. B. Meyer.*

Saturday, 8th. *Go now ye that are men, and serve the* LORD. *Exodus x. 11.*

I am not careful for what may be a hundred years hence. He Who governed the world before I was born shall take care of it likewise when I am dead. My part is to improve the present moment.—*John Wesley.*

Sunday, 9th. *He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. Job xxiii. 10.*

The Master will mix the hours as it pleases Him, and so we should accept them with murmurless spirit, if we are expecting Him to work out His own purpose in and through us. Bright and dark days will often stand close together, but each shall come to declare His message. God has a golden thought and purpose back of every dark experience, and when He has thus tried us, He will bring us forth as gold. Yes, to take life as it comes; not to be so anxious about the form of the day as the life of the spirit it should enshrine—this is the secret of unfolding God's noble thought in terms of generous and Christ-like living. The crown of the morrow lies in that approach to the Christ-character which a life of faithfulness to-day makes real and abiding.—*I. Mench Chambers.*

Monday, 10th. *No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light. Luke xi. 33.*

It is both a daring and a dangerous thing to try to live secretly for Christ. It breaks off the sprouting tendrils of the new life, and so there can be neither bud, blossom, nor fruit. A light shut up tight in a lantern only soots and burns that which contains it. So it is with the soul. It is its nature to shine forth, but turned back upon itself it dims and dies.—*Selected.*

Tuesday, 11th. *None of us liveth to himself. Romans xiv. 7.*

When the desolate, aching void enters your heart and casts a gloom over your face, remember that it is a comfort to others to see a cheerful spirit, a sunshiny face, a merry tongue, an even temper.—*Selected.*

Wednesday, 12th. *By love serve one another. Gal. v. 13.*

There are two sides of life's road—the side on which are lying the wounded, the suffering, the needy, the despoiled, the dying, and the "other side." The "other side" is a well-trodden side. It is the easier side to go on. There is nothing to interrupt us. We do not need to lose time in stopping to help people who are sick, weak, fainting, wounded, or in any want or trouble. We shall get along faster on this side and shall save ourselves a great deal of inconvenience and annoyance, and much uncomfortable feeling. But this "other side" bears none of the footprints of Jesus.—*Selected.*

Thursday, 13th. *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. Matt. xxvi. 41.*

The Master sounded His alarm bell so loudly against entering into temptation because He knows that He has not a single follower who has not some vulnerable point. At the vulnerable point is the spot to post the sentinel; we must watch and pray right there. Beware of the sin that has a handsome face and a smooth tongue. Look out for the sin that says, "Oh, I am only a little one"; sins are never content to be babies. Look out for temptations that jump with your natural inclinations. Form no intimacy that lowers the tone of your religion. Keep away from places and from amusements, however attractive, that soil your conscience and weaken your love of Christ, and unfit you for prayer and doing your whole duty. You can ask Jesus Christ to be with you and to go with you everywhere else except when you "enter into temptation."—*Theodore L. Cuyler.*

Friday, 14th. *Deliver us from evil. Luke xi. 4.*

After praying "Deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever, Amen," we ought to be able to rise from our knees and say, "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."—*Selected.*

Saturday, 15th. *Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. 1 Tim. iv. 12.*

Be what you wish others to become. Let yourself, and not your words, preach for you.—*Amiel.*

Sunday, 16th. *Faithful in all things. 1 Tim. iii. 11.*

It may be that we cannot be great, let us be good. If we cannot shine as great lights, let us make our light shine as God has made it to shine. Let us live lives as in the presence of Christ, anxious for His approval, and glad to take the condemnation of the world, and of Christ's professed servants even, if we get the commendation of angels and of our Master. The "Well done" is to the faithful servant, the *faithful,* not the great. Let us watch and pray that we may be faithful.—*James Gilmour.*

Monday, 17th. *I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. Phil. iv. 11.*

True contentment depends not upon what we have, but upon what we would have: a tub was large enough for Diogenes, but a world was too little for Alexander.—*Selected.*

Tuesday, 18th. *To every man his work. Mark xiii. 34.*

Let me but do my work from day to day,
In field or forest, at the desk or loom,
In roaring market-place, or tranquil room.
Let me but find it in my heart to say,
When vagrant wishes beckon me astray—
"This is my work; my blessing, not my doom;
Of all who live, I am the one by whom
This work can best be done, in the right way."

Then shall I see it not too great, nor small,
To suit my spirit and to prove my powers;
Then shall I cheerful greet the laboring hours,
And cheerful turn, when the long shadows fall
At eventide, to play and love and rest,
Because I know for me my work is best.

—*Henry Van Dyke.*

Wednesday, 19th. *Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. James i. 22.*

The devotional life is not meant to be divorced from the practical. Spiritual truth was not meant to be banished from the work of the world. Men cannot always sit at the foot of the cross. They cannot always abide in the hallowed upper chamber of prayer, for, ever and anon, there comes to most of them a call for daily bread. If religion is to hold its influence over them, it must go with them to their work and teach them how to live, as well as how to die.—*Samuel Smith Harris.*

Thursday, 20th. *He led them forth by the right way. Psalms cvii. 7.*

The Arabs have a saying that all sunshine makes the desert. Men often sigh for entire exemption from care and sorrow. If this prayer were answered they would not be the men that they are. In the silent, dark hours character of a certain sweet, tender type is matured. Other kinds of character are brought out by the sunshine. God sends all kinds of weather to the soul which He would develop in His likeness. —*Selected.*

Friday, 21st. *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. John xvii. 17.*

While the Spirit of God is the Author of sanctification, yet there is a visible agency employed which must not be forgotten. The passages of Scripture which prove that the instrument of our sanctification is the Word of God are very many. The Spirit of God brings to our minds the precepts and doctrines of truth, and applies them with power. These are heard in the ear, and being received in the heart, they work in us to will and to do of God's good pleasure. The truth is the sanctifier, and if we do not hear or read the truth, we shall not grow in sanctification. Hold fast the truth, for by so holding the truth shall you be sanctified by the Spirit of God.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

Saturday, 22nd. *The* LORD *will give grace and glory. Psalms lxxxiv. 11.*

There is not such a great difference between grace and glory after all. Grace is the bud and glory the blossom. Grace is glory begun and glory is grace perfected. It will not come hard to people who are serving God down here to do it when they go up yonder. They will change places, but they will not change employments.—*D. L. Moody.*

Sunday, 23rd. *Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Josh. vii. 10.*

"Save us from surprises," is a petition we all may well offer concerning evil. We think we know our temptations and are watchful against them. We grow complacently sure that we are overcoming old habits, and then, just when all seems to be safe and smooth and we are congratulating ourselves on a period of peace, there comes a sudden rush from some unexpected quarter, the defenses go down, and the field is overrun before we know what has happened. It is no permanent victory of the wrong, however. God knows that in His loving tenderness, and we also know it even in our pain and humiliation—but so many things are left torn and tangled. So much must we begin all over again. There are hurts that must be bravely bound up, and weak places patiently strengthened once more. But it is in these fresh beginnings that much of life's discipline lies, much of the testing of our real determination and loyalty. There is no virtue in being defeated, but there is virtue and courage, too, in refusing to remain defeated.—*Selected.*

Monday, 24th. *And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. Col. iii. 17.*

Our sanctification does not consist in changing our work, but in doing for God's sake what we have formerly done for our own.—*Brother Lawrence.*

Tuesday, 25th. *Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you. 1 Peter v. 7.*

He that taketh his own cares upon himself loads himself with an uneasy burden. The fear of what *may* come, expectation of what *will* come, desire of what will *not* come, and the inability to redress all these, must needs bring him continual torment. *I* will cast my cares upon *God:* He hath bidden me. They cannot hurt Him: He can redress them.—*Bishop Hall.*

Wednesday, 26th. *Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God. Psalms cxliii. 10.*

The bringing of the powers of our own life into tune is really the great problem of all spiritual culture. While the audience is waiting for the concert to begin, they hear a strange clangor back of the scenes. The instruments are being brought into accord. At first they are far apart, but in a little time they are all in perfect harmony. Then the music begins. Each human life is a whole orchestra in itself. But it is not in tune, and before we can begin to make sweet music all its many chords must be brought into harmony. This is the work of spiritual culture. It is achieved only by the submission of the whole life to God. —*Selected.*

Thursday, 27th. *In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good. Ecclesiastes xi. 6.*

The seed we have sown with an earnest will,
Though among the thorns it fell,
A harvest may bring for the reapers' hands:
The result we cannot tell.

. . . . . .

We never may know while we labor here
What the fruits of toil may be,
But when we shall stand on the golden heights
We 'll the gathered harvest see.

—*E. W. Chapman.*

Friday, 28th. *God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. 1 Cor. i. 27.*

God Who prepares His work through ages, accomplishes it, when the hour is come, with the feeblest instruments.—*Selected.*

Saturday, 29th. *Our God is a consuming fire. Heb. xii. 29.*

We cannot do without awe. There is no depth of character without it. Tender motives are not enough to restrain from sin. —*F. W. Robertson.*

Sunday, 30th. *I am with you. Matt. xxviii. 20.*

Those four words, "I am with you," are

to be found at every great crisis of the history of believers from the days of Abraham to the days of Paul. When God called Abram from Ur of the Chaldees to go out knowing not whither, He assured him of His presence. To Jacob at Bethel He said, "I am with thee in all places whither thou goest." So when Isaac was going to Padan Aram, when Moses was going to Pharaoh, when Joshua was leading the people into the land of promise, when Gideon was going against the Midianites, and when Solomon was undertaking the kingdom. Over and over again in Isaiah we read, "Fear not, I am with thee." And now when Jesus Christ was leaving the great work of missions to His disciples He repeats this Jehovah promise, that threads the whole Old Testament: "I am with you."—*Selected.*

DEVOTIONAL STUDIES IN THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSONS.

Rev. F. B. Meyer.

THE CITIES OF REFUGE.

(November 2, Joshua xx. 1-9.)

The practice of Goelism—by which the nearest relative of an individual who had been killed was bound to demand satisfaction from the author of his death—existed, we are told, from a very remote antiquity. Traces of this custom are evident in Gen. iv. 14; xxvii. 45. It was certainly an established usage in the days of Moses, and it is clear that in the early stage of human society there was no other method of dealing with crimes of violence. In the absence of judges, law-courts, and officers of police, there was no alternative, if murder was to be avenged, than to entrust the infliction of the death penalty to the nearest kinsman.

This principle, however, was liable to very great abuses. For instance, the kinsman, who was bound in duty and honor to execute justice, would be inclined to be precipitate, and little disposed in the heat of passion, and under the impulse of revenge, to examine into the circumstances of the case, or discriminate between the premeditated purpose of the assassin, and the misfortune of the unintentional homicide.

Then again, the tendency of this system was to foster a vindictive spirit. If the Goel was unsuccessful in finding his victim, he would be likely enough to transmit the feud to his heirs and successors to avenge on the descendants of his enemy from one generation to another. This is exemplified, as Canon Fausset tells us, among the Arabs of the present day. Should an Arab of one tribe happen to kill one of another tribe, there is *blood* between the tribes, and the stain can only be wiped out by the death of some individual of the tribe with which the offence originated. Sometimes the penalty is commuted by the payment of a stipulated number of camels or sheep. But such an equivalent, though offered, is as often refused, and blood has to be repaid only by blood.

Moses did not attempt to abolish this system, but whilst sanctioning its continuance, was directed by divine authority to make some special regulations, which tended both to prevent the unhappy consequences of sudden and personal vengeance, and at the same time, to afford an accused or suspected person time and means of proving his innocence. This was the humane and equitable object contemplated in the institution of the Cities of Refuge.

There were to be, so Moses legislated, six of these legalized asylums, three on the east and three on the west of the river Jordan; and they were available, not only for the native Israelite, but for all resident strangers (Num. xxxv. 9-28; Deut. xix. 1-13).

The roads leading to these cities were to be kept in good condition, and the brooks or rivers to be spanned by good bridges. The width of the roads was to be thirty-two cubits; and at all the cross roads, sign

posts were to be erected with the words, *Mekeleth, Mekeleth;* "refuge, refuge!" painted on them.

The cases for which these cities were prepared were carefully defined. They must be those of *unmistakable homicide.* When a man set a stone rolling from the top of a cliff, with no evil intention, and perhaps by pure accident, and it struck and killed a wayfarer in the valley; or when an ax-head slipped from the helve and struck a man who was working beside his neighbor; when there was no lying-in-wait, no evil intention, no murderous design—the manslayer might find refuge in one of these cities until the death of the High Priest. It was expressly stipulated that he should abide within the precincts of the city until that event, whether the time were long or short. This confinement was a wise and salutary rule, designed to show the sanctity of human life in God's sight, as well as to protect the man-slayer himself, whose presence and intercourse in society might have provoked the passions of the relatives of the deceased man.

But the benefits of this asylum were not extended to him until it was clearly proved that he had a right to them. The cities belonged to the Levites (Num. xxxv.), who were specially able to hold investigation into the doubtful cases, and their sacred character would be eminently suited to calm and restrain the stormy passions of the blood-avenger. Directly the fugitive passed the gate, he was safe from immediate peril. Then an investigation was instituted into the crime of which he was accused, to discover whether it was murder or manslaughter. If the former, the criminal was at once handed over to the pursuer; if the latter, the vote of the people (*of the congregation,* Num. xxxv. 25) delivered him, and secured immunity, so long as he did not venture forth beyond the city precincts.

The names of these cities are suggestive. We would not press the points of resemblance unduly, but there does seem some deep analogy between the names of these Cities of Refuge, and His character Who is the Harbor of all lamented and driven souls.

Kedesh stands for *Sacred or Sanctuary.* We are reminded of the old custom for fugitives from justice to claim sanctuary in ancient minsters and cathedrals. There is for instance a spot in Westminster, called the Sanctuary, where such were wont to find asylum. But in the Redeemer there is sanctuary indeed. If you would fly from God, fly to God. We have strong encouragement, because we have fled to Christ for refuge; and from that safe hiding-place none, neither man nor devil, shall be able to drag us forth.

Shechem stands for *Shoulder.* Probably it was situated on the shoulder or ridge of a hill. It was a strong position. We are reminded of Benjamin who was to dwell between the shoulders of the Almighty, and of Isaiah's prophecy that the government was to be on the shoulders of Emmanuel. In any case, "our Redeemer is strong:" and there is no cause for alarm in the breast of any fugitive. God hath "laid help on one that is mighty."

Hebron stands for *Rest;* either the first rest, which comes when the dread of the results of a broken law is dissipated by the cross; or the second rest, which comes when the soul no longer strives against the will of God, but meekly accepts it. "Come unto me, and I will *give* you rest. . . . Learn of me, and ye shall *find* rest."

Bezer stands for *Ore.* This reminds us of the unsearchable riches of Christ which await our appropriation. We may say of Him, that God has filled Him that we may be filled. All that is needed now is to be enriched by Him in all knowledge and power. Whether we come suddenly on our inheritance in Christ, as the husbandman came suddenly on the buried casket of treasure, struck by the ploughshare; or discover it, as when the man sought goodly pearls, by an earnest quest,—he that findeth Christ and is found in Him findeth great spoil.

Ramoth stands for *Height.* Probably the city was set on a hill, and could not be hid, and hence its suitability for the purpose of a refuge-city. So is our Lord highly exalted, and a name is given to Him which is above every name—not for Himself or for His own glory merely, but that He may also lift us to sit on His throne, and share His royalties. "I will," said He, with a marvelously assured accent of prerogative,

"that they . . . . whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am."

Golan stands for *Passage or Exodus.* Can we forbear to remember that in Him we have passed from death unto life, and have been translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son, in Whom we have forgiveness? "Whosoever," said our Lord, "heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me, hath passed from death unto life." Here is no matter for mere emotional response, but for the quiet assurance of faith. If God says by His Son that we, who believe in Him, have passed from death unto life, then, whatever our fears or feelings may suggest, there can be no possible doubt that we are standing on the resurrection shore, that we have passed through the Red Sea, having left our Egyptian task-masters to sink like lead in the mighty waters.

The fugitive was to remain in the Refuge City "until the death of the High Priest." But thank God, though the priests of Aaronic descent were not suffered to continue by reason of death, it is witnessed of our High Priest, Who is made after the order of Melchizedek, that He liveth and is a Priest forever. "Because he abideth forever, he hath his priesthood unchangeable, wherefore also he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw nigh unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth!" Let us abide in Him for ever, in Him alone is eternal salvation!

JOSHUA'S PARTING ADVICE.

(November 9, Joshua xxiv. 14-25.

Fourteen years after the conquest of Canaan, and about seven from the distribution of the land among the tribes, Joshua felt that his end was approaching, and in the first instance, convened the officers and representatives of the people to Shiloh. An account of this memorable gathering is given in the previous chapter.

A final gathering was held, as described in this chapter, when the entire congregation, or at least all that could assemble, were summoned to meet their venerable leader at Shechem, under the ancient oak or terebinth, beneath which Jacob had buried the idols and charms found in his family (Gen. xxxv). It may be that to give special solemnity and impressiveness to the occasion, the Ark of the Covenant was brought from Shiloh, and it is to this that reference is made in the first verse, "they presented themselves before God."

Joshua then briefly recapitulated the salient features of the past, bringing out the evidences of the Divine goodness to Israel, and insisting that they were indebted for their national existence, and for their peculiar privileges, not to any merits of their own, but to the free grace of God. At the close of this enumeration, he turned to ask that they should declare, in the most solemn manner, their intention and resolve to be faithful and obedient to Jehovah.

What followed may be divided into a Fourfold Challenge on the part of Joshua, and of Reply on the part of the congregation.

First Challenge. "Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the strange gods which your fathers served beyond the River (i. e., the Euphrates) and in Egypt." There is a clear indication in these words that hitherto there had been a good deal of secret idolatry among the people, from the earliest days of their national existence, and after the manner of surrounding nations. Jacob's favorite wife had harbored her father's teraphim in her camel's baggage, and Laban was convicted of their use (Gen. xxxi.). The patriarch had urged his household and all that were with him, to put away their strange gods, and he had buried them under that very oak (Gen. xxxv. 2-4). But they had come again, apparently, into general use, as the result of the debasing associations of Egypt, where the people neglected the Sabbath, and assimilated closely to the corrupt civilization that surrounded them. Even whilst Sinai was thundering forth its announcements of the unity and spirituality of God, the germs of idolatry were present among the people, as the black spores of blight (*smut*) are present in the corn-fields, awaiting favorable conditions for their manifestations, and only restrained by the genial heat of the August sun.

This is the natural tendency of the human heart. It needs something sensible and tangible, which it can appreciate as an outward embodiment of God. Nor is God

indifferent to this longing, for has He not given Himself to us in the Son of His love—the Man, Christ Jesus? "The Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us, and we beheld his glory." "No man hath seen God at any time, but the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." The word *idol* is almost an exact reproduction of the Greek word, which means *something that can be seen:* and the Lord Jesus is the visible appearance of the infinite God. "Little children, keep yourselves from idols," because Jesus Christ is the Divine Man in the midst of the throne. Find God in Him, and worship Him there.

The appeal of Joshua was a very wise one. It lay at the beginning of spiritual religion. Even though the people did not violate the first item of the decalogue, to violate the second was a bar on their true development. Alas, however, many centuries were to pass before the love of idols was burnt out of the people by bitter sorrows and repeated trials. Reformations, led by men like Josiah and Hezekiah, and consummated by the exile in Babylon, were needed to complete their deliverance.

First Response. Joshua gave the people choice between the gods of Babylon, which Terah and Laban served beyond the Euphrates (vs. 2, 14), and the gods of the Amorites, as the only alternative if they would refuse the service of Jehovah. But the people were unanimous in their determination to follow him and his house in serving the Lord. "God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods." And yet within a few years, we have the sad record of Judges ii. 12. It was with them as indeed it is with us all—we recognize that God has brought us out of the land of the enemy and made us His own; we are conscious that His grace has given us a name and a place among His children; but we do not realize that the grace which made must keep us, and that it requires as much of the mighty power of God to maintain us in holiness and righteousness as to bring us out of darkness and rebellion. Only the Holy Spirit can maintain for us that love, that power, that devotion to God, that prayerfulness of spirit, which we acknowledge as our ideal, but which mocks our unaided strength.

The Second Challenge. "And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD, for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgression nor your sins." It would almost seem as though God refused their first offers of service; but it was not really so. Joshua, in the Divine name, bade them pause, bade them sit down and count the cost, bade them consider how absolutely unable they were to meet all the demands which so holy a Being must needs make on them, as the prerequisite of all true fellowship with himself.

Yes, God is holy; and it is not possible for us to walk with Him, save in the Name and Righteousness of the Lord Jesus. Our best efforts, compared with His holy nature, are as twilight compared with noontide. It is needful, therefore, that the blood of Jesus Christ should cleanse constantly and effectually from all sin, not only as *we* see it, but as *He* sees it. But when we are in Christ, the Divine jealousy turns against our sins. "The spirit which he made to dwell in us yearneth for us even unto jealous envy" (Jas. iv. 5). Only yield to God, until, like fire, the Holy Spirit shall rid you of all that vexes and grieves Him.

Do not play at religion! Be everything or nothing! Do not limp between two opinions! If you cannot and will not pay the full price, do not profess to be a Christian, else you bring shame on God and awful judgment on yourself. Remember the fate of Ananias and Sapphira his wife. But if you will be only and absolutely for God, how gladly you will be welcomed.

The Second Response. "And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we *will* serve the LORD."

The Third Challenge. And Joshua said unto the people: "Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him."

It is a solemn moment in the soul-life when it definitely elects Christ as King. Before King Edward VII. was crowned, all the peers and peeresses waited with their coronets in their hands, but as soon as the Archbishop placed the crown on his head, each of them put on the golden circlet glittering with jewels, and immedi-

ately the Abbey shone with myriads of electric lights. Is not this emblematic of the joy which comes into life when the soul crowns its rightful monarch. All its faculties are instantly crowned with a new royalty, and glow with a fresh brilliance. See to it that you choose "the LORD to serve him!"

The Third Response. From thousands of throats, and with a thunder of acclamation came the response, "We are witnesses."

The Fourth Challenge. "Now therefore put away," said he, "the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD, the God of Israel." What is it that intercepts your love and faith, that stands between God and you, that monopolizes your faith and love? Let it be put away.

The Fourth Response. "And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and unto his voice will we hearken."

Deeper than the clamor of the world, the voices of our advisers, and even the tones of our own heart, there is one deep voice, which the sheep know as the Shepherd's. We hear it when we are in sorrow, when we are amid exquisitely lovely natural scenes, or when the heart is called to live for a little on the borderland between Time and Eternity. "My sheep hear my voice, and they know me, and follow me."

So the covenant was made; and witnessed by the great stone Shechem. It was necessary in those days to associate great religious acts with some permanent object, by which their remembrance might be recalled at sight. There were no daily papers, no historical records. So many of us still can associate with certain spots transactions between ourselves and God, the memory of which will remain with us while life shall last.

THE TIME OF THE JUDGES.

(November 16, Judges ii. 7-19.)

There are three or four key-words to this remarkable book. *"In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes."* This phrase occurs to account for Micah's erection of a minature shrine (xvii. 6); for the migration of a clan of the Danites to find new territory (xviii. 1); for the awful crime which led to the almost annihilation of the tribe of Benjamin (xix. 1); and for the curious way in which, with the concurrence of the elders, wives were secured for the surviving Benjamites (xxi. 25.)

It is a bad thing for the individual and for the community, when a man does that which is right in his own eyes. We are never at our best, so long as there is a lack of kingship. Our own way may seem right in our own eyes, but its end is death. To be our own centre, to revolve around our own pivot, to gird ourselves and walk whither we will, is certain to lead us, sooner or later, to the valley of Hinnom, which may stand for the rubbish-heap of the universe.

What a contrast to the great Apostle, who was always exercising himself to have "a conscience void of offence toward God and man;" and who speaks of the four courts of judgment before which he was habitually standing! "Judged of you" —the court of the Church; judged "of man's judgment,"—the court of public opinion; judging "mine own self,"—the court of conscience; He that judgeth me is the Lord,—the supreme court, where Jesus, the Son of Man, has all judgment committed to Him (1 Cor. iv. 3, 4). Even though a man knows nothing against himself yet is he not thereby justified, for the only Judge is the Lord.

Let us see to it that we enthrone Christ as King, putting Him where the Father has put Him; so that every tongue within us may confess that He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. "If thou shalt confess Jesus as Lord, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. x. 9, R. V.).

"And the children of Israel did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD." This is the sad monotonous introduction to successive oppressions. It is the general heading of this epitome of the book (ii. 11); it precedes their subjection to the king of Mesopotamia (iii. 7); their subjection to Jabin and Sisera (iv. 1); their subjection to Midian (vi. 1); their subjection to the children of Ammon (x. 6); their subjection to the Philistines (xiii. 1).

Whenever we knowingly and willfully do evil in the sight of the Lord, we are sure to suffer for it. I believe that there

is a profound significance in those solemn words, "If he commit iniquity I will chastise him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men." In other words, God will use men, their words and deeds, as the rod by which He chastens us back to Himself. It was said by a large publisher the other day, that in times of great prosperity, the sale of religious books goes down, but as soon as times of depression and slack trade come, there is an immediate demand for them. It is as though our losses and depreciations in value, which come to us through men, were needed to bring us back to God. Though your sins may be forgiven, there is a sense in which their full entail may have to be borne not as punishment but as chastening, though God will never take away His mercy.

And he sold them (ii. 14; iii. 8; iv. 2). "Their Rock sold them" (Deut. xxxii. 30). But God never sells a man till he sells himself. What an awful word that was which Elijah addressed to Ahab at the gate of Naboth's vineyard, "Thou hast sold thyself to do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD" (1 Kings xxi. 20). And the same verdict was passed on Israel (2 Kings xvii. 17). It is for our iniquities that we are sold (Is. l. 1, 2). We sell ourselves to our sins, and then we are sold into the hands of our enemies. As long as we are right with God, He constitutes Himself our defender, no weapon that is formed against us prospers, and we condemn all those who rise against us in judgment; but directly we are alienated from God, our strength departs from us and we become even as other men.

"When the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, *the* LORD *raised up a saviour"* (ii. 18; iii. 9-15; iv. 3, 4; vi. 7, 8; x. 10). How beautiful and appropriate are the words of the Psalmist, Psa. cvi. 41-45:—

Their enemies . . . . oppressed them,
And they were brought into subjection under their hand.
Many times did he deliver them;
But they were rebellious in their counsel,
And were brought low in their iniquity.
Nevertheless he regarded their distress,
When he heard their cry:
And he remembered for them his covenant,
And repented according to the multitude of his mercies.

Such words are full of encouragement for us also, especially the "many times," because we too have sinned, and have been carried away into bondage to our tyrant oppressors; we too have cried out in our distress, and "many times" He has succored, and His "repentance" on our behalf has been according to no less a standard than the "multitude of His mercies."

He raised up very different people to be the instruments of His saving might. There were Deborah, the prophetess; Jephthah, the wild free-booter; Samson, the great humorous child of nature and passion; Gideon, the younger son; and Eli, the priest. So in helping us, and restoring our estate, there is a wonderful inventiveness in our God. No one deliverance is quite like another, but each is efficient for the fulfillment of His purposes of mercy.

O back-slider, who thinkest that God hath in anger shut up His tender mercies, so that He will be favorable no more, knowest thou not that He "waits to be gracious," and that so soon as thou givest the least sign of repentance and regret, He will hasten to succor thee? It repenteth Him because of them that oppress and vex thee (verse 18). "His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel" (x. 16).

"But it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they turned back." This is the most grievous record of any! But it recurs again and again (iii. 12; iv. 1; vi. 1; viii. 33). So fickle and changeful is the human heart, even when the memory of some great deliverance is fresh, that it turns back like a deceitful bow.

What is the cure for this waywardness? Let us remember the warning of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews: *Take heed . . . . lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God; but exhort one another day by day, so long as it is called To-day; lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin* (Heb. iii. 12, 13). From this we gather that falling away from God is due, *first* to unbelief, and *next* to the deceitfulness of sin. Who has not found it so?

First, when we find ourselves face to face with some awful difficulty, instead of reasoning that since God has brought us into it, we may trust Him to bring us through

and out, we begin estimating our own poor resources, until we have lost sight of Him. There is the "evil heart of unbelief," which departs from the living God, which goes down to Egypt for help, and which hews out for itself broken cisterns that can hold no water. Thus the understanding between God and us is broken, we have begun to depart from Him, and the little rift will widen till it makes the music mute.

Next, there is "the deceitfulness of sin." The tempter comes as an angel of light. We find it difficult to suppose that the step which he suggests is so very wrong. There seem to be reasons why what might be wrong in another may be permissible for ourselves. We feel almost able to justify a slight deviation from the absolute standard, because of our very special circumstances. When once we are launched on the current, we find that it goes even more swiftly, so that what seemed innocent enough, and only an ordinary stream, turns out to be a headlong torrent.

Let us exhort one another, therefore, daily. When we see in another something that causes us anxiety let us not hesitate to go to him, and wash his feet of the stain, or take the beam or mote from his eye. Let us watch over one another, lest we drift insensibly into the far country of departure from the living God.

TEMPERANCE LESSON.

(November 23, Isaiah xxviii. 1-13.)

These words were spoken in the earlier part of Hezekiah's reign, and disclose a terrible condition of morals in the two kingdoms, into which the Hebrew people were divided. In each case drunkenness, with its attendant sins, was awfully rife, though there was a godly residue.

The prophet sets himself, with all the earnestness and eloquence at his command, to combat this gigantic vice, not only because of the havoc it was making in the souls and bodies of his fellow men, but because as a patriot he knew that a drunken nation cannot long withstand a sober one. He realized that by the doors of luxury and self-indulgence the foe creeps up into the citadel. It cannot be too earnestly insisted upon that every nation, at a certain period of its existence, has been beset by this fatal snare; and it becomes us all not only to abstain from intoxicating liquors, but to exert our influence over others, especially the young, whether in the primary or Sunday schools. It is they who have to rule the future, to them that we must commit the making or marring of the coming time. It would be well, therefore, if in every class on this great Temperance Sunday, and in every family, the teacher or parent would not only show the evils of strong drink, but would definitely propose to take the pledge in company with the boys or girls, the young men or women, whom God has committed to his charge.

I. The Drunkenness of Israel (vs. 1-4). Ephraim stands for the northern kingdom. It was full of drunkards (v. 11; Amos iv. 1; vi. 1-6). They prided themselves on their capital city, Samaria, which stood at the meeting-place of several valleys, carefully terraced, the choice vineyards of which gave rich and luscious wines. What chaplets of flowers placed on the brows of revelers are to the drunkard's feast, that Samaria was to those valleys, and to the rest of the land. It was their crown of pride. It stood in glorious beauty at the head of the fat valleys. The beautiful city seemed like a crown of glory and beauty laid by the bountiful hand of Providence on the sunny land of Canaan. There was no thought of the brewing storm, no fear of the judgment which was imminent. King and court, nobles and common people went on in their evil courses, hiding their eyes from their perils, and only intent on carouse. "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

But the prophet draws aside the veil, and shows that Assyria, as "a mighty and strong one" was being prepared by Jehovah to punish his people's sin; and that shortly the Assyrian hosts (under Shalmaneser) would let loose upon the careless and self-indulgent nation, as a tempest of pitiless hail, "a destroying storm, as a tempest of mighty waters overflowing." Then the proud city of Samaria would be trampled under foot, as a chaplet of flowers in the morning, when the dawn looks in on a chamber where a company of revelers has spent the night in riot. The floor is

stained with wine, and the flowers are ruthlessly trodden under foot. The prophet employs another figure, when he says that as the passer-by plucks the first ripe fig which he sees, and eats it without ado, so the Assyrian general would dispose of Samaria.

"The world passeth away and the lust thereof," only "he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." If we indulge our passions, we become ephemeral and evanescent, there is nothing permanent or abiding in our character and influence. The men who live and wield power over the ages are those who have learned to refuse self-indulgence, to put restraint on appetite, and to live with girded loins. Would you be as a wilted flower or an oak, as a first-ripe fig or a banyan tree, always propagating itself in further circles? Choose! And to begin sign the pledge against Intoxicating Drink.

II. The Blessedness of the Residue (vs. 5, 6). When we "seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, all other things" are added in due course. If we renounce the lower, we win the higher. What other men obtain through self-indulgence, we enjoy in God. There are compensations for us, of which men of the world do not dream. They only see what we renounce, not what we receive. We have meat to eat that they know not of. We have fountains of supply of which they cannot partake. We have an altar to which they have no right, who serve the tabernacle.

This is beautifully illustrated here. What Samaria, with her rich valleys and luxuriant pasturelands, was to Israel's drunkards, that God Himself was prepared to be to His people. What chaplets of flowers, crowns and diadems are to the revelers, that pure and undefiled religion becomes to those who walk uprightly. Some day, we are told, the elect souls whom God has loved shall be His crown and diadem (lxii. 3); but here and now we should crown ourselves with His grace and beauty, His truth and love, so that those who know us may feel that we are as proud of God as the bridegroom is of his ornaments, and the bride of her jewels. With this in mind, we find new meaning in the cry of the oldest psalm, "Let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us."

But God is willing to do more. Life is not given us to be spent in enjoyment, even though it be religious. "Life is real, life is earnest." Some are called to sit in the seat of judgment, whilst others have to turn back the battle at the gate. To this man the senate and forum, to that the engagements of commerce and manufacture. Here, the student and man of letters; there the warrior and man of affairs. Now John and again Peter. But none of us is left to carry out our life-plan in the energy of our own individuality. Of course we can, if we will; but there is no necessity that we should. If only we will avail ourselves of the resources of God, and learn to appropriate them as we need, in answer to our faith, claiming His gracious help, we shall find God to be a spirit of judgment when we sit in judgment, and strength when we are called on to hurl back the assailant from the city gate.

All that the man of the world finds in the things of the world, we can obtain in God. *He* seeks adornment, beauty, mirth, in the pleasures of the table; give us pulse to eat and water to drink, and see if our faces are not fairer and our flesh fatter (Dan. 1). *He* seeks wisdom in the adventitious help of the wine cup; but God gives us knowledge and skill, because our brains are clear and our hearts pure. *He* seeks strength in spirit, which is soon exhausted, whilst as we wait on the Lord we renew our strength. "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit," from which we infer that all which men of the world think to get in their drams, we get in reality and power from the eternal God.

III. The Drunkards of Jerusalem and Judah (vs. 7-13). In these more favored quarters, the same sins were beginning to show their heads. "These also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are gone astray." The priests reeled whilst they performed the sacred services of the temple, and the prophets staggered as they uttered their messages. So abominable was the excess that the banqueting rooms were filled "with vomit and filthiness, so that there was no place clean."

It was almost in vain for the prophet to rebuke these awful scenes, for they mocked him in scorn. They laughed out

in his face, saying: "Whom do you propose to teach, and whom do you expect to make understand your message? Take it to those who have just been weaned, or the babes that are being suckled at their mothers' breasts." They went further, and even mimicked his speech. This appears very clearly in the original, as may be seen if we change the Hebrew letters into our own: *Tzav latzav, tzav latzav, qav laqav, qav laqav.* These men, who were totally unable to restrain appetite, posed as highly intellectual and cultivated people, who needed something more profound than the easily intelligible words in which the prophet couched his denunciations of their sins. We have to confess with shame that learning and culture have often enough been associated with gross habits of life: and when this is not the case, they are as often as not associated with that mocking ridicule of religion which affects a proud superiority to its simple admonitions.

Isaiah answered this impertinent mimickry by telling them that if they would not listen to him, God would speak to them by other lips, referring of course to the guttural tongue of the Assyrians. He was willing to give His people rest and refreshment, a pause and parenthesis amid the wars and controversies of the time, the only condition of this being obedience. But they would not hear, therefore instead of rest there would be war, and instead of refreshment the harass of defeat and captivity (verse 13). And the wearisome monotony God would enforce line upon line, precept upon precept, even though they refused to listen.

Here are two distinct issues presented. We must choose one or another. Either yours must be a life of self-indulgence, in which you may sink to the level of the brutes and lower, or yours must be the steadfast resolution to deny the lower, that you may enjoy the higher. Believe me that every time you say No to self, you say Yes to God. Even if the outward man decays, the inward is renewed day by day. Tennyson's story of the Round Table is replete with teaching along that line. Contrast Arthur and Lancelot, Enid and Vivien, Sir Galahad and Gavain. Fight the good fight,

"Follow the chase! Follow the Christ, the King;
Live pure, speak true, right wrong, follow the King,
Else wherefore born?"

GIDEON AND THE THREE HUNDRED.

(November 30, Judges vii. 1-25.)

Gideon's life is specially encouraging for younger sons. He had the smallest possible self-estimate: "O LORD," he said at the greatest crisis of his life, "wherewith shall I save Israel? behold my family is the poorest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." But these are the men whom God selects for the accomplishment of His highest purposes. When shall we learn that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; that it is not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord that the best work is done in this world?

Our subject naturally divides into the testing of Gideon's followers, the encouragement and strengthening of his own faith, and the glorious victory which he achieved.

The Testing of Gideon's Followers. The mustering place was a spring in the valley of Esdraelon, not far from Gilboa. The hosts of the Midianites and Amalekites were encamped in a valley, a short distance off to the north. They were as locusts for multitude, and their camels without number (vi. 5). Compared with these the thirty-six thousand who had responded to Gideon's trumpet-call, must have seemed but a small handful, and the volunteers who gathered around him must have been very deficient in their equipment. But even these were too many for the Divine purpose; and there was every fear that when the victory which God had already pledged Himself to give fell to Gideon's faith, it would be credited to the numbers of the Israelite hosts.

This number was thinned, first, by issuing the usual proclamation, which Moses had prescribed (Deut xx. 8), and then by the test of the stream. The latter was a very remarkable one. Gideon, at the Divine command, brought his ten thousand remaining warriors to the water-tank, and watched them narrowly as they drank. What a small thing may be the test of

character, and how little do we guess who may be watching us, and what great events may turn on the most trivial behavior on our part. It is by the smallest things in our lives that we are most tested and revealed. When some great crisis arrives, we summon our whole strength for the ordeal, and resolve to play the man. We remember how many eyes are upon us, and what great issues depend on our being faithful to our trust. We go down into the arena to show that we are made of the genuine metal. But it is not thus that our real selves are made known. It is when we are at home, with those whom we know perfectly, or when we suppose ourselves to be unobserved, then and in the most trivial commonplaces that we show our true character. Some profess to be able to read destiny in the markings of a hand, and it is not easy to realize how so much may be told in almost imperceptible curves. But it is morally and spiritually true that the almost insignificant incidents of life are all big with destiny. I heard of a young man being taken into a firm and afterwards becoming a partner, who, on being refused a situation on his first application, was self-possessed and careful enough to pick up a pin as he left the store. The manager happened to see him and felt that there were valuable qualities in him which were worth annexing for the firm.

The bulk of Gideon's men threw themselves on the grassy bank at full length and took long leisurely draughts of the flowing waters. This at once showed that they were destitute of the alert soldier-like spirit, which does not dare relax whilst the enemy is still undefeated and possibly near at hand. But three hundred caught up the water in their hands, and so conveyed it to their mouths, whilst they stood on the alert. If at that moment the foe had leaped out of ambush, they would not have been taken unawares. Is it to be wondered at that God said "By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you"?

It is a profound lesson. The church is full of men who seek their own ease, casting themselves on the ground, and consulting, as their first concern, their own interests. But these are not the chosen warriors of the cross. They are good enough for parade days. But in the days of stress and storm, *they* are sought for who stand with girded loins, on the alert, refusing to risk being taken at unawares.

II. The Strengthening of Gideon's Faith. So much depended on the faith of this single man, as the pivot on which the lever of the Divine help rested, that his almighty Friend took every means of encouraging and strengthening him. Already he had seen the angel of the Lord do wonderful things with the provisions that were laid before him; and had tested the Divine will by the miracles of the fleece. But now once more his faith was to be strengthened by overhearing the talk of a couple of soldiers in the camp of Midian.

It was a courageous exploit for the two Hebrews to venture into the camp of Midian, but they were assured of the Divine warrant to do so; and it was as though their faith was called upon to try its newly fledged wings in the lesser flights before they ventured forth on the greater. God often urges us to smaller ventures, and shows Himself strong on our behalf, that we may rise through these into an unwavering confidence in His ever-present aid.

What was Gideon but a loaf of barley bread—the commonest kind of meal, used only by the poor? But if God were behind him, in him, and with him, not one tent only, but the whole camp would be overturned. There is no limit to what God will do by a man who is really surrendered to Him, and absolutely trusts Him. With five barley loaves and two small fishes Christ fed the crowds. By twelve apostles, mostly fishermen, He built the Church.

I like to think of Gideon listening behind the tent curtain, and under the thick veil of night, whilst the soldier told his comrade his dream and heard the explanation; and of his reverent acknowledgment on the spot of the presence and guidance of God. "And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, *that he worshiped.*" This was the act of a truly devout soul to whom God's presence was the one great reality. Whether in daylight or darkness, is his father's vine-press or in the camp of Midian, Gideon, like Elijah, stood always in the presence of Jehovah.

III. The Glorious Victory. There was a wise and prudent distribution of his

forces. The crash of the breaking pitchers, the flashing of lights on three sides of the sleeping host, the blast of the trumpets on the still night air, and the shout of three hundred throats were enough to alarm the bravest; and in the confusion it was small wonder that every man should think his neighbor his deadly adversary. "The LORD set every man's sword against his fellow."

But the main interest for us gathers around that battle cry: "The sword of the LORD and of Gideon." *It was not the sword of the* LORD *alone,* for in His infinite wisdom God does not work apart from man. During His earthly ministry, our Lord said, "*We* must work the works of him that sent *me,*" and again, "Whence shall *we* buy bread that these may eat?" He was always employing His disciples to seat the crowds, or roll away the stones from the grave, or let down their nets for a draught of fish. He took them with Him into the room where the little maid was lying dead, and sought their sympathy in the dread hour of His anguish. Whenever God has aught to be done in the world, He calls in His Gideons. Not by Himself, but by His chosen human instruments, He effects His mighty plans.

And it was not the sword of Gideon alone. For however careful he was in laying his plans and disposing of his meagre forces, it was evident that the marvelous result could not be attributed to him. Shall the ax magnify itself in proud independence of the arm which wielded it? Shall Milton's pen glorify itself as the author of "Paradise Lost"?

But it was one sword wielded by two. "The sword." Here is a sublime instance of the oneness of God and His servants in the prosecution of the Divine plan. It is not possible to describe that intimacy and co-partnership more concisely than by realizing that for all practical purposes, though not in all the divine meaning which Jesus Christ put into the words, each of us may say with Him,—"I and my Father are one." In Hebrews xi., Gideon is mentioned as one of the heroes of faith; and faith is just the capacity for receiving God, that He may work in and through us all His will. He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

(INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSONS FOR NOVEMBER, 1902.)

CITIES OF REFUGE.

(November 2, Joshua xx. 1-9.)

The care of God for the children of Israel is never better seen than in His provision of cities of refuge, which served a twofold purpose. Not only were they a refuge to the fugitive, but they were to assure the regular course of law. The city of refuge was not a final appeal, but was only an instrument of justice, and justice must guard the innocent as well as punish the evil doer. No fugitive from the result of his own evil doing would be apt to flee to one of these cities, for there he was certain of undergoing trial. In fact, his very presence there, was prima facie evidence that he desired a trial. The presence of the fugitive in the city of refuge would also have a restraining influence upon the avenger of blood, for if the latter had desired merely revenge, he was at once deprived of that, but could find satisfaction in justice if he so desired. Thus while it saved the innocent, it also saved the avenger from the shedding of innocent blood.

With the new dispensation the cities of refuge would be as superfluous as, in the old, they were necessary. When Christ changed the law it was simply by teaching men that the heart was the source of evil. Moses had said that righteous action was enough—and until the Israelites had learned the lesson it was—but he had said nothing about the control of the passion or the condition of the heart. Thus the avenger of blood was possible under Moses' law, but not under Christ's. The institution of these cities was therefore a check on the evil passions of men, else unprovided for, and shows as much God's love for His children as His infinite wisdom.

JOSHUA'S PARTING ADVICE.

(November 9, Joshua xxiv. 14-25.)

The choice which the children of Israel were called upon to make here, was not an arbitrary one. They had experienced again and again God's power and care, and in their generation had witnessed the overthrow of Jericho and *knew* the power of their God.

On the other hand they could not be altogether ignorant of the real nature of the gods of the surrounding nations, gods of wood and stone which could not even hearken to the prayers offered by blind and superstitious devotees. Nor were they unaware of the awful and polluted nature of the worship of these same gods in which phallic worship and infanticide played no small part. It was not only for their moral and spiritual good that they must choose the true God, but for their social good and for the advantage of every phase of their life.

It is in part for His own sake God desires our adherence to Him, but it is even more for our own. As the Israelites could never have arisen from the dust of superstition and the bondage of fear, while they bowed the knee to the local Baals, even so it is inherently impossible that we should rise to any of the pleasures and privileges God has in store for us while we grovel before the powerless Mammons of man's creation. Ignorance is the only excuse which could be valid for the acceptance of any but the true God, and the Israelites could no more plead ignorance than can we today.

Joshua emphasized one thing in his offer to the tribes: *They could not serve but one.* It must be God *or* Mammon. The worship of one absolutely precludes the worship of the other. It was not that they "must not"; then, as now, it was "could not."

THE TIME OF THE JUDGES.

(November 16, Judges ii. 7-19.)

At this point in Israel's history begins the record of that dreary series of lapses from God, brightened only by God's unfailing love and forgiveness and His unceasing efforts through judges and prophets to bring them back to Himself. The firm hand of the warlike Joshua is no sooner removed from the helm than we find Israel slipping away, unmindful of all that God has done for them and for their fathers. We ask ourselves as we read the story of God's measures to bring them back to Himself: Did God actually deliver them up; to their enemies for chastisement, or did He not rather leave them to go their own course, while with sorrow He watched them wander continually into all the evils and unhappiness which result in a revolt from the theocratic rule? Was it so much the punishment God sent, as the result of the very things He strove to keep them from? The mother tells the child not to touch the hot iron, not for her own sake, but the child's, and the pain which results from disobedience, is it not more the evil from which the mother wished to preserve the child than the punishment? So with the children of Israel. That which Jehovah wished to preserve them from was the evil and degradation necessarily attendant upon idol worship and where they disobeyed, God's punishment was to let the laws of the nature He has made have their way and to stand aside whilst they reaped in their moral, physical and national decay, the results of their apostasy. God for the time forsook, and to be God-forsaken is the severest penalty which can fall on a man or a race. Yet God forsook them not till they forsook Him.

TEMPERANCE LESSON.

(November 23, Isaiah xxviii. 1-13.)

This lesson, like the last, illustrates the effect of man's struggle for his own way. "Man's chief end," we are told, "is to glorify God," and the joy of life, the exaltation and exultation which man longs for, should be found in his whole-hearted service of God. Paul tells the Ephesians (verse 8) not to be drunk with wine but, he boldly says, to be filled with the Spirit, as though all that the emotional nature of man demands, as well as the reasoning powers, could be found in full enjoyment of communion with God.

It was said of Spinoza that he was a "God-intoxicated man." Ephraim, wandering from God and losing the happiness and peace attendant upon communion with Him

and obedience to His will, chose the devil's substitute and destroyed the physical in the pursuit of the emotional. And the result was the inevitable, which attends man when he attempts to gain by his own means the gifts which God has ordained should be won in special ways. Man strives for the enjoyment of peace and those pleasures which God alone gives through obedience and harmony with His laws. But by the indulgence of the sensual, man brings upon himself sure destruction.

Notice the overwhelming nature of the fall—even the prophet and the priest, the fountain of all that was best and highest, had been polluted. The drunken priests in God's temple and maudlin prophets led the people deeper and deeper into sin. It was not that man's cravings and appetites were wrong, but that they were pandered to with that which could not satisfy. A famous rescue worker has declared that those elements in a man's nature which led him deepest into drink, are those which make him an exceptional power for good when once every faculty has come under the regenerating power of the love of Christ.

GIDEON AND THE THREE HUNDRED.

(November 30, Judges vii. 1-25.)

Two all-important truths are to be found in this lesson—the little things by which character is determined and the coöperation of God in all work to which He calls His servants.

I. *By the three hundred that lapped will I save you and deliver the Midianites into thine hand"* (verse 7). What, of such a trivial act as the mere drinking of water does God take notice and choose or reject a man to undertake a special work for Him? Yes, for as the old adage says, "A straw will show the way the wind blows." A man who, with an enemy "without number" (vi. 5) nearby who at any moment may surprise him, can bow down upon his knees to drink, is not the one to be relied upon in the time of danger. The men God could use to go forth with "the sword of the LORD and of Gideon" were the men whose creature-comfort was made subservient to the need of the hour, men who, should the enemy burst upon them at a moment's notice, were upon their feet ready to face the foe.

And still it is by such trifles that men show what stuff they are made of. It is in the little acts of daily life, not in the great crises, that our true character is shown. For a great crisis we pull ourselves together and make one tremendous effort to show the world how brave, how noble we can be under stress of circumstances. It is the little things in our everyday life, in our homes, in the family, in business, among our friends, the little, unconscious, off-guard actions that betray our real selves. And by these it is that God is testing us. He puts us to run with the footmen before calling us to contend with horses. He tries us in the land of peace ere summoning us to the swelling of Jordan. And only those who prove their sufficiency for the former test does He honor by putting to the second.

II. *"The sword of the* LORD *and of Gideon"* (verse 18.). Under no circumstances does a God-sent man go forth alone to fight the battles of the Lord. Unseen by the natural eye, it is true, yet none the less certainly is there present with him "the captain of the host of the LORD," and He it is Who is ever foremost in the fight. When "the sword of the LORD" is in the van Gideon may safely follow, no matter even if it lead him with his handful of men against an army "as grasshoppers for multitude." That sword is all-conquering, never yet has it lost a battle, and God Himself shall change ere it fall into the hands of the enemy.

Go then, Christian worker, if God is calling you, even though your family may be poor in Manasseh and you the least in your father's house. Earthly position counts for naught in the battles of the Lord. You are fighting under His banner, and there ever in front, hewing down all enemies and overthrowing all obstructions, is "the sword of the LORD." Keep your eye fixed steadfastly upon it, follow close in its wake and you shall know what it means to be "more than conqueror."

GOLDEN TEXT HOMILIES.

Rev. R. A. Torrey.

November 2nd. *"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Psalms xlvi. 1.*

Happy is the man who has made God his refuge and strength. No real harm can ever overtake him. He has a refuge to which he can flee in every hour of temptation or trial and sorrow, "a refuge never failing." No matter what the peril, or what the grief, he flies to God and all is calm and rest. God is sufficient for anything that can arise. And our refuge is always near at hand, a very present help in trouble. The Israelite had often to flee a long way to his city of refuge, but ours is always close at hand; in a moment we are there. Happy also is the man who can say, "God is my strength." If He is indeed our strength, we shall win every battle that we fight. Our enemies may be too strong for us, but they are not too strong for Him, "there is nothing too hard for the Lord"; so there is nothing too hard for us, if He is our strength. The trouble is that we say that He is our strength while all the time we are trusting in our own strength. If He is our refuge and strength, not only in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth, then we shall never fear under any circumstances, not even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.

November 9th. *"Choose you this day whom ye will serve." Joshua xxiv. 15.*

Every man must choose his own God for himself. No one else can choose for him. They can help you to a decision, but the final decision must be made by yourself. If we choose the true God, then the future is all brightness, and abounding blessing. But if we choose the wrong God, the future is darkness and ruin. As to what God to serve there can be no doubt upon the part of men who keep their eyes open, and look honestly about them. Those who serve the God of the Bible, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, unquestionably have the best of it. He is the God to choose. And when shall we choose Him? "This day," at once. Why put off for a day, or an hour, a choice fraught with such momentous consequences? If it pays to serve the God of the Bible, and it certainly does, then choose Him at once. That was a special day when Joshua gathered all Israel together at Shechem and put this matter before them, and so is this day a special day. You will never see its like again. If you do not choose the true God to-day, you will never have as good a chance again. Even if you choose Him to-morrow, you will for all eternity be one day behind what you might have been.

November 16th. *"They cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses." Psalms cvii. 19.*

Yes, that is what men do in all ages; they forget the Lord in their prosperity and cry unto Him in their trouble. Four times are we told in this one Psalm how men cry unto the Lord in their trouble. The same story is repeated over and over again in our own land, and our own day. Men in their prosperity live as if there were no God, but just as soon as they get into trouble they suddenly get very religious and cry unto the Lord until the trouble is over, and then many of them forget again. But wonderful is the grace and patience of the Lord; when men cry unto Him He listens, "and he saveth them out of their distresses." How well we remember, now we stop to think of it, how there came upon us an hour of deepest trouble, and we cried unto the Lord and He saved us. And what did we do then? Very likely we forgot all about it, until the next time we were in trouble. Oh, that we might not forget! "Oh, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" But even if you haven't done that, if you are in trouble cry unto the Lord and He will save you. That is what God sends trouble for, to get us to cry unto Him.

November 23rd. *"They also have erred through wine." Isaiah xxviii. 7.*

These words were written a long, long

time ago, but they describe what is going on to-day. Who can number the vast multitude of men and women of all ranks of society who have erred (or, gone astray, R. V.) through wine? Notice that the man of God says through "wine." Not through distilled liquors, as whiskey or rum, but through that which many who call themselves "temperance people" think so innocent,—wine. How many a woman, all that was worst in her inflamed by wine, has taken a step that has marred her whole after life! How many a young man has taken a glass of wine from the hand of a fair and thoughtless temptress, and that glass of wine has set on fire the appetite for drink that was slumbering within, and that young man to-day is a tramp and a sot. When one opens his eyes and sees what is going on around us every day, and notes the vast number of men and women, oftentimes men and women of superior abilities, who have gone astray through wine, if he has good sense, he will leave wine severely and entirely alone.

November 30th. *"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man." Psalms cxviii. 8.*

It is for a fact. Indeed the very best thing that any man can do is to trust in the Lord, and about the worst thing that any man can do is to put confidence in man. "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm" (Jer. xvii. 5). Trust in man, even the best of men, and you are doomed to disappointment sooner or later. But trust in the Lord and you will never be disappointed. He will keep you in perfect peace, if you trust in Him (Isaiah xxvi. 3). He will never fail you (Heb. xiii. 5, 6). There are some times when man can't help you if he would. There are other times when man won't help you if he could. But there is no time when the Lord can't help; and there is no time when He won't help. What folly then to put confidence in man, when the Lord is always at hand and one can trust in Him. This is the great secret of independence of man, trusting in Jehovah.

Young People's Department.

All communications referring to this department should be sent to the editor, Miss Anna W. Pierson, 1127 Dean Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

XI. MADAGASCAR.

Of course you all know that Madagascar is an island off the east coast of Africa. Perhaps you do not know, however, that it is so large that England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales could be put into it. I am sure you will be glad to hear of the little Malagasy children and the country they live in.

The people of Madagascar are divided into tribes. Many of these are very degraded and worship idols and even offer human sacrifices. The Hovas, who live in the central part of the island, have given up their idols and become Christians. The missionaries went there nearly one hundred years ago, and after much labor won many converts. The queen, Ranavalona I., was so wicked that she persecuted the Christians and put hundreds of them to death most cruelly. Even young children who refused to worship the idols, because they had learned of Jesus and His love, were beaten or thrown over a precipice and killed. When this wicked queen died, her successor was a Christian, so there was no more persecution. A church was built, the idols were destroyed and the tribe became Christian. For this reason the children of the Hovas are much happier and better than those of the other tribes. We will look at them first in their heathen condition, and then see how much better off they are when living in the light of the gospel.

WHEN A BABY IS A WEEK OLD

the parents send for a *diviner* to see if the birth was on a lucky day. He makes a number of wise calculations, by which he pretends to find out. Those born on unlucky days are usually disposed of in some

way, lest when they are grown they shall bring some evil upon their parents. Sometimes these unlucky babies are given away, or put down by the roadside, either to be picked up by some passerby or left to starve or to be eaten by wild beasts. Others are drowned or left by the ox-pits to be trampled to death by the oxen. In a few cases, however, the little lives are spared, as if by a miracle; the oxen, instead of trampling upon them, either walk around or jump over them.

BABY'S FIRST OUTING

is an important event in his life. A young woman, who has no children and whose parents are living, is chosen to carry the child. At the threshold a small fire is kindled, over which she must jump with the child in her arms. If it is a boy, the father or servants carry all manner of war or farm implements after him. He is either carried to the town court-yard, where earth is rubbed on his head, and friends express their good wishes for his future, or he is carried to the ox-pits to look at the cattle, that he may early have a desire to own many. If the baby is a girl, sewing and weaving implements, or silk cocoons are carried after her, that she may be skillful in womanly employments.

THE BABY'S FIRST LAUGH IS IMPORTANT TOO,

and the person who has the honor of causing it is expected to make the little one a present. The first hair-cutting is also a great event and performed with much ceremony and rejoicing. At this time the name is usually given, and queer names they often are. How would you like your name to be Isilaka (little chip), or Ibitika (tiny), or Belohataona (born in spring)? You could not say them in a hurry, could you?

THE NATIONAL FOOD IS RICE,

and a little of it is put into the baby's mouth the day he is born. The Malagasy children eat it at every meal, year in and year out! No jam and pies, or cakes and puddings for them, but rice, rice, rice. It takes a large quantity of it to satisfy a hungry child, so sometimes the mother, before a meal, ties a string loosely around his waist. When the string gets tight he is *voky* or "full." Besides rice they have plenty of fruit, bananas, oranges, pineapples, peaches, and melons, which grow on the island. But let me tell you something else these distant cousins of yours eat, and enjoy too—locusts, grubs, and nice fat moths. When a swarm of locusts comes the children are delighted, and run about catching them in nets or baskets by the dozen. They are roasted or boiled and eaten with as much relish as you would eat chestnuts. Fat moths roasted are an especial treat.

THE CLOTHING OF THE CHILDREN

is very scanty, often nothing more than what nature has given them. When they do wear any, it is simply a piece of cloth tied about the waist, or a larger piece like a sheet, which they drape around their shoulders quite gracefully. This is called a *lamba,* and is worn by both men and women. The Christians and more civilized people usually wear shirts and trousers, or petticoats under their lambas. The natives are very skillful in making cloth from vegetable fibre and silk, and some of their lambas are fine silk with beautiful patterns woven into them. The women and girls also make exquisite silk lace of graceful design. Hats are worn by the men, but not usually by the women. They, however, dress their hair elaborately, sometimes dividing it into small strands and knotting it like fringe all around the head. When they are in mourning they undo their hair and pull it out so that it stands out all over their heads and gives them a wild appearance.

THE HOUSES

are usually built of mud or sun-dried brick, thatched roofs, no chimneys, only one window and a low door. Let us go into one and see if it is more inviting than it looks; but be careful to stoop so as not to bump your head. My! what a dark, smoky place it is, and where are we to sit? Certainly not on that dirty floor. But there are no chairs, only a few stones raised from the floor for a stove, and *one* bed. One bed for five people? Yes, for the children sleep on the floor. What is that in the dark corner over there? A pig, as sure as you live. One corner seems to be reserved for fowls, sheep, and pigs. No wonder the place smells bad and we are glad to get into the air again.

THE GAMES OF THE CHILDREN

are generally rather quiet ones, not requiring great activity. They like to play they are grown up, so the boys put on false moustaches and the girls make babies out of roots and carry them on their backs. They also play a game called *Kindriandriana* (the little princes). It is much like doll's-house. Bits of glass or crockery and stones are used as dolls; the glass representing the royalty, the crockery the common people, and the stones the slaves. The children gather flowers and with them make an enclosure in the sand for a garden. In this they mark off a space for the house. Then they stick their dolls in the earth and move them about, at the same time telling wonderful tales of what they are doing, as you have so often done with your dolls. They are also fond of playing funeral. First they make a tomb, and then hunt for something to bury. If they have nothing dead, they catch a cricket or grasshopper and kill it. Then they wrap it in leaves in place of a *lamba,* and forming into a procession they bury it with great ceremony and mourning.

DUMB ANIMALS ARE CRUELLY TORTURED

because the children are not taught to be kind to them, and probably do not realize how they suffer. They delight in cricket fights. First they dig a small pit and catch a number of crickets. These they put into the pit, two by two, to fight after pinching them to make them angry. Each boy urges on his own cricket, and the one that is beaten gets his feet pulled off by his master, or is killed.

In the evening as the family sit about, waiting for supper, they are fond of telling riddles. I'll give a few and see if you can guess them before looking at the answers.*

1. If you try to lift it you can't, but it is easily moved.
2. A little fellow whom all the household trusts.
3. God's little lake in which you cannot swim.
4. When cut it shows no wound.
5. The little fellow who does not respect guests.

* 1. Shadow. 2. A bolt. 3. The eye. 4. Water. 5. A flea.

In their heathen condition the natives are filthy in their conversation as well as in their habits. In some places they never wash their clothes or even their dishes, and the floors of their houses are used as garbage pails. They are also very superstitious, and have hundreds of things which they must or must not do because it is lucky or unlucky.

THEY BELIEVE SICKNESS IS CAUSED BY EVIL SPIRITS,

and they call in diviners to tell them the cause and what to do. Sometimes he orders some cattle to be killed, and if that does not make the child better he may command the parents to kill one of their slaves. Many a poor slave has been murdered in obedience to these cruel commands.

SLAVERY IS ONE OF THE SADDEST THINGS

in Madagascar. Children are torn from their parents and sold to cruel masters, and never know a parent's love and care. Those of you who have read "Uncle Tom's Cabin" will have some idea of what suffering is caused by slavery.

The idols of these people are without number. They worship anything that is new or curious, besides any number of imaginary demons or evil spirits.

The uneducated natives are dull, lazy, and dirty, but

WHEN THEY BECOME CHRISTIANS

they are most anxious to learn, and study with zest. They become bright, lighthearted and active, and cleanly in their habits. In school they learn everything by heart, consequently arithmetic, which cannot be done in that way, is very hard for them. The multiplication is a mystery. They cannot understand how the teacher can know that seven times seven is forty-nine unless he takes seven times seven sticks and lays them down and counts them.

When they become Christians they will endure persecution, torture, and even death for the sake of their Saviour. Their loyalty to Christ would put most of us to shame. Let us try always to be loyal to Christ and to pray and give, that more Malagasy boys and girls may learn of Jesus and His love. —*(Facts gathered from H. F. Standing of Madagascar.)*

BISHOP THOBURN'S WORK IN INDIA.

Letter From Rev. N. L. Rockey.

EDITOR RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK:

Dear Sir:—The last mail brought to me $60 with the note that it was sent by the readers of your magazine. This is only one of many kindnesses to India that has come through your influential paper. It has occurred to me that the constituency might like their own representative in this fruitful field and I am taking the liberty to appoint a man whom you can consider as your substitute as long as the money comes to supply his monthly allowance.

I have just come back from the summer school of all workers of the Meerut district, North West India Conference. I was more than pleased with what I saw there. Rev. P. M. Buck, Presiding Elder. is a master-hand at organization and manages to take thorough and cheerful work from a force of native brethren and sisters who are helping him to win the people to Christ. His district is what is known as Meerut Bulandshahr and Muzaffarnagar of the North West India Conference. It is a territory a little larger than the State of Massachusetts, and contains over three million inhabitants. In this territory he has altogether three hundred and nine Christian workers. This includes women and voluntary Sunday school teachers. The work of our mission was begun there about fourteen years ago and the total number of Christians reported last January was 22,329. Truly this is a wonderful growth. Brother Buck is a very good spiritual teacher and his people are developing well.

Mr. Buck's first work in India was in connection with the first Orphanage of the Methodist church at Shahjahanpur. While he was there, there was an orphan in the school by the name of Daniel, a bright energetic fellow who learned English very well and passed out of the school to become an effective teacher. He took the name Buck in honor of the missionary he loved and has been known since then as Daniel Buck. Daniel Buck is now one of the most honored ministers of the North West India Conference and a preacher in charge of one of the largest circuits. He is especially seeking to obtain converts amongst a class of people called *Chamars*. They are despised by the higher caste of people because of their simplicity. Technically they are known as leather workers; that is, they will handle dead animals, obtain the skins, tan them and work them up into the different articles of trades. I am sorry to say that some of them would eat them, but not all of them. As a class, however, they are mostly farm laborers. They are not Hindus, but are very clannish and have clan leaders who have great power over them. A number of these clan men have become Christians and their people are looking toward Christianity as the only means of elevating them in this life as well as a basis of hope for the future. The prospect amongst this class of people is very bright and were I to prophesy, I should say that in the next twenty years there will come 100,000 converts from among them.

I believe that the readers of the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK will be glad to supply Brother Buck's monthly allowance. He is an educated Christian and with a growing family cannot live on a salary that pastor-teachers obtain. The $60 which you sent to help will supply his salary for over three months. You may consider him yours, to pray for him, to look, to give for, and if you accept the charge I will see that you hear from him direct.

So much of our work is done on faith that the money will come, but I am sorry to say that we are at present at least $3,000 behind the obligations we have taken upon ourselves.

I am hoping still further that some day you will have your own American representative in this field. Find him for us. He must be a man with a wife and they must be well educated, people of consecrated conscience. I am,

Sincerely yours,

N. L. ROCKEY.

Sitapur, India.

Religious Thought and Activity.

"Righteousness Exalteth a Nation." Grand Duke Boris of Russia since he arrived in this country has openly consorted with fast women. Last week he visited the summer home of the President of the United States and was treated as befitted his official station; but he was not presented to Mrs. Roosevelt. The president does not allow conventionalities to obscure the deeper realities of life. He has nothing but abhorrence for the criminal and vicious of his kind who traffic in women, and he will not conceal his feelings even to please the Grand Duke of Russia or to avoid offending Russia.—*Exchange.*

Preach Christ Crucified. A young man just starting upon work in the ministry was one day talking to an aged minister in London, who had spent a lifetime in the service. The young man said: "You have had a great deal of experience; you know many things that I ought to learn. Can't you give me some advice to carry with me in my new duties?"

"Yes, I can," was the response. "I will give you a piece of advice. You know that in every town in England, no matter how small, in every village or hamlet, though it be hidden in the folds of the mountains or wrapped round by the far-off sea, in every clump of farmhouses, you can find a road which, if you follow it, will take you to London. Just so every text you shall choose to preach from in the Bible, will have a road that leads to Jesus. Be sure you find that road and follow it; be careful not to miss it once. This is my advice to you."—*Exchange.*

Senatorial Temperance. To those who know aught of the state of things in Congress fifty years since, so ably described in George Julian's "Political Reminiscences," the following statement by "Grapho" will be most gratifying:—

> Judge Foster, who has a fine cottage on the brow of the hill at Macatawa, and who is a member of Congress from Chicago, tells me that there are very few intemperate men in either house of the national parliament. "Of the three hundred and fifty-seven members of the House," he said, "I do not know of more than twelve men who could be called drinking men, and during my four years' membership I have not seen more than three members intoxicated."—*Advance.*

The Old Catholic Congress at Bonn. We are glad to note that the Old Catholic movement is far from being fossilized. The fifth International Old Catholic Congress, which has just closed its sessions at Bonn, Germany, was particularly interesting because for the first time we have official statistics of the number of Austrians who, on account of the "Los von Rom" (Emancipation from Rome) movement, have left the Roman Catholic for the Old Catholic communion. Bishop-elect Warnsdorff, of Austria, stated that the Old Catholics had gained no less than seven thousand Austrian members since the beginning of the emancipatory mission. Most of these are Germans in speech, the minority being Czechs. It is interesting to compare this proportion with that, as reported, coming from the Roman Catholic Church in Austria, and affiliating with either the Lutheran or the Reformed branches of the Protestant Church—nearly nineteen thousand persons.—*Exchange.*

Massachusetts Sunday School Convention. The Annual State Convention of the Massachusetts Sunday School Association was held at Springfield, October 7-9 inclusive. The general theme of the convention was "Looking Forward—Into the Community, Into the Church, Unto Christ." The opening address was delivered by Rev. O. P. Gifford, D. D. (Buffalo). Rev. A. F. Schauffer, D. D., spoke on "Modern Child Study and Some of its Results" and "The Study of the Bible—Plus What." "The Work of the Year" fell to Mr. W. N. Hartshorn, chairman of the state executive committee, who

also spoke on the coming International Sunday School Convention to be held in Jerusalem, 1904. Rev. J. H. Matthews (Worcester) gave a stereopticon lecture entitled "Glimpses of the Denver Convention as Seen by a Delegate."

The Origin of Babism. There may be those who do not know precisely what Babism means. From an interesting paper by Mrs. Robert E. Speer we condense the following extract:—

> "Christianity attacks the Moslem citadel from without; Babism is a revolt from within. Mirza Ali Mohammed, the Bab, was born in 1820 at Shiraz. He was a thoughtful and studious child, the stuff of which mystics and reformers are made. By the term Bab, Mirza meant to signify the channel of grace from some great Person of boundless perfections, still behind the veil of glory, whose will he obeyed and to whose hand he clung. Mirza's first convert was made in 1844. The new movement provoked the bitter antagonism of the orthodox Church, but it grew rapidly notwithstanding. In 1850 and 1851 more than four thousand followers of the Bab were put to death. The Bab was himself slain July 15, 1850. But Babism continues to flourish and is stronger than ever to-day."—*Woman's Work for Woman.*

The Source of Bullen's "Style." When asked to what source he owed his "style," Frank T. Bullen, the famous sea-story writer, replied:—

> "The source of my 'style,' as you are pleased to term it, is the Bible. I began reading that earlier than I can remember; I have lived forty-three years, fifteen of which I spent at sea, climbing up from cabin boy to chief mate, and I have read the Bible through from cover to cover, twenty-five times. You cannot quote the first half of any verse of which I cannot give you the second half.
>
> "Nothing has taken hold of my heart and soul like the Bible. I used to preach in the open air, and sometimes when I felt I had no words of my own, I would recite a whole chapter, by memory, from Isaiah, or Job, or one of the gospels. The Bible and John Bunyan have really formed my style. But then, there 's the inspiration of the sea! What colors in sky and water! Dip your pen in those, and you can't fail to be picturesque and interesting."

Sinai and Calvary. The following coming from the lips of one who has every right to know whereof he speaks—the venerable Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler—is well worthy of wider dissemination:—

> "These are times for plain utterances of God's truth. Are we of the Christian ministry wholly guiltless in regard to widespread collapses of character? Have we all lived up to the Bible standard? Have we preached Sinai as well as Calvary? Let us not forget that God speaks from both mountains. Has there not been too much rose-water preaching about 'God's love' and 'developing the manhood within us,' and an easy, velvet-footed religion which ignores the sinfulness of sin, and the certainty of hell? This is no time for letting down bars either in Christian doctrine or Christian practice. From that dust of humiliation and sorrow in which many fallen ones are lying, comes a solemn voice of admonition to every pastor and every preacher of the world. Let that minister of Christ who thinketh that he standeth on the sure rock of Divine truth take heed lest he fall into compromise with error, or concealment of God's just threatenings, or into connivance with soul-ensnaring sins!"

Light on Biblical Language from Ancient Babylonia. The beautiful brief poem embedded in the book of Numbers (vi. 24-26) is believed to be one of the oldest in the Bible, and to have been used as a form of benediction in most ancient times. It is, "The LORD bless thee and keep thee: the LORD make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." Dr. Frederick Delitzsch says that its full meaning has not been understood until it was recently discovered that in Babylonian usage "to lift up one's countenance or eyes upon another" was a form of speech for "bestowing one's love upon another, for gazing lovingly and feelingly upon another, as a bridegroom upon a bride, or a father upon a son." Thus, with cumulative emphasis, this benediction invokes God's blessing and protection, His benign and gracious consideration and, lastly, God's own love upon His children. Dr. Delitzsch finds in the tablets and in the images and inscriptions dug up in the Euphrates valley suggestions

elaborated not only in the books of the Old Testament, especially in the language of the Hebrew prophets, of Job and the Psalms, but also in the words of Jesus and in the imagery of the book of the Revelation.—*Congregationalist.*

The Student Volunteer Movement in Japan. The value of the Student Volunteer Movement is shown to be of practical value when it is realized that there are in Japan at present some one hundred and thirty volunteers actively engaged in mission service. A considerable number of these met in Karuizawa for the first convention of the Japan League of Student Volunteers. The subject before the convention was "The Need of More Men for the Ministry." The discussions were taken part in by both volunteers and others of experience. The meetings were most spiritual and profitable. The great need of more workers for the regular work of the churches as well as for the broader work of the spread of the gospel among the unevangelized was dwelt upon. Numerous reasons were assigned and reasons of temporal nature given for the hesitancy of men to enter this work. The failure to appreciate personal respon sibility in the matter of evangelizing the country and the failure to fully realize the lost condition of the people without Christ were thought by most to be the chief reasons for the lack of men. The small career open before an evangelist, the financial difficulties he is likely to meet, the opposition of friends, were some of the temporal reasons given why men hesitate to enter upon this work, but it was generally thought that these would quickly melt away before the power of God in the heart revealing the great principles of our religion.—*Ex change.*

Awakening at Lovedale. In an account of a visit paid a few weeks ago to the Lovedale Missionary Institution, Rev. David Russell says:—

> The visitor to Lovedale cannot fail to be struck with the deep, strong, spiritual atmosphere in which everything is carried on. There is an Institution church, to which students are invited for worship. Prayer meetings and Bible classes lay hold of the students, and bring them under the very best influences, and the members of the staff who can teach or preach are kept continually at work.
>
> Soon after the beginning of each session a week of evangelistic services is held. If no specialist can be obtained for the work, it is undertaken by the members of the staff. They, I should say, are all specialists. The results are always satisfactory. This year they have been specially so. Mrs. Stewart assured me that there has been nothing like it since 1874, when there was a great outpouring of the Spirit. Two great revivals stand out prominently among all the work I have undertaken in this country—Durban in 1878, Greytown in 1882. A third must now be added—Lovedale in 1902.
>
> The services covered eight days in all. There were, I think, about one dozen meetings of various kinds. The attendances at the principal meetings probably averaged six hundred persons. The attention was always remarkable, and the after meetings were as large as I have ever seen. Two hundred and forty-two decision cards were signed. They are registered, every one of them, and arrangements have been made to follow up the work in every case. Of course, I do not say that all these are conversions; these are simply inquirers, decisions registered here below. The real work is known to God alone, and the laborious work of bringing the grain into God's storehouse belongs to others; but I, for my part, earnestly and thankfully bless God that it has been my unspeakable privilege to help for a few days those honored servants of the Most High, who, with a devotion which fills one's soul with gratitude to them and to the Master Whom they serve, are bearing the burden of the great soul-saving and mind and hand training work for Christ at Lovedale. —*Missionary Record of the United Free Church of Scotland.*

The Work of the L. M. S. From the one hundred and seventh Report of the London Missionary Society just published, the *Christian World* condenses the following:—

> The detailed surveys of progress in the various mission fields are stimulating records of solid work. China is given the first place. In Hong Kong evangelistic work in the new territory of Kowloon is apparently hampered by the fear among the people that the territory will be handed back to China some day, and that then those who have adopted the religion of the foreigners will be severely punished. The hos-

pitals had a busy year, and the new dispensary was largely taken advantage of. Throughout the report the success of medical missionary work is constantly emphasized. Dr. Fahmy, of Chiang Chiu, shows how the hospital helps, by stating that the majority of those who eventually become church adherents in his district were favorably impressed while under treatment in hospital, especially as in-patients. From Hankow Dr. Griffith John reports great activity and encouragement, and the testimonies from other missionaries seem to indicate that the clouds which broke over the Chinese missions have rolled by. The Theological College at Hankow has been opened, with Dr. John as president. Reconstruction has become necessary, but education appears to have received a great impetus from the change in the political situation.

The reports from India indicate quiet, uneventful work, and slow but steady progress. The need for much more widely spread and thorough evangelization is urged in the report from the Murshedabad district, while the devastating effects of the plague give a drab tone to the reports from Benares, where, however, the bearing of the Christian community during the scare was exemplary, as it was also at Gooty and other stations. The reports from Madagascar show that the troubles of past days are apparently over, and that the Society's missionaries are no longer the victims of suspicion and mistrust. The resumption of responsibility for the elementary schools considerably increases the Society's expenditures in Madagascar, and contributes largely to the financial difficulty. Notwithstanding the restrictions caused by the application of martial law the Society's South African work went on. The moral condition of the mission in Hankey is a pitiful picture of vice and indolence. The Central African mission was sorely tried by deaths and retirement. The New Guinea mission was understaffed during the year, owing to the massacre of James Chalmers and Oliver Tomkins, and the exceptional sickness among missionaries and native teachers, and a somewhat depressing report comes from the pen of Rev. A. E. Hunt.

The statistics as to the Society's staff, etc., show that the male missionaries number 206, the female seventy, while there are 940 ordained native pastors, 3,474 native preachers, 1,208 Christian male teachers, 271 Bible women, 310 Christian women teachers, 64,716 church members and 194,777 native adherents. The Society's Sunday schools number 1,283, and include 54,249 scholars, while there are 1,642 boys' day schools with 59,966 scholars, and 190 girls' day schools with 30,467 scholars. The local contributions amount to £22,116, the school fees £5,954, and the medical mission receipts £3,343, making a total of £31,414 raised and locally appropriated at mission stations.

Work at Home and Abroad.

Receipts for September, 1902.

Pandita Ramabai's Work for India's Child Widows:

N. C., Albany, N. Y.	$ 5 00	
J. R. B., Montreal, Que.	5 00	
Friends, Buffalo, N. Y.	5 00	
G. L. C., Lodgepole, Nebraska	5 00	
A Friend	2 00	
C. E. R., East Billerica, Mass.	5 00	
		$ 27 00

Mr. J. D. McEwen's Work in South America:

E. L. S., Newhampton, N. Y.	$ 2 00	
J. C. H., Northampton, Mass.	1 00	
L. L. C., Northampton, Mass.	1 00	
K. H. S., Northampton, Mass.	2 00	
C. A. T., Roseland, La.	5 90	
R. R. M., St. John, N. B.	8 90	
		$ 20 80

Dr. Paton's Work in the New Hebrides:

S. G. R., Stockbridge, Wis.	$ 1 00

Moody Memorial Endowment Fund:

A Friend, Lawrence, Mass.	$ 5 00	
H. B. A., New York City.	10 00	
A Friend, Brooklyn, N. Y.	25 76	
		$ 40 76

Chicago Bible Institute:

T. H. W., Newmarket, N. H.	$ 1 00	
A. W., North Lawrence, N. Y.	5 00	
		$ 6 00

Bishop Thoburn's Pastor Teacher:

A. A., Middle Valley, Idaho.	$ 30 00

Free Distribution of Religious Literature in Prisons:

H. S. W., Rochester, N. Y.	$ 2 00	
H. M. A., South Charleston, N. H.	1 00	
		$ 3 00

Northfield Seminary:

Cash	$ 5 00	
M. C. B., Dedham, Mass.	5 00	
E. S., Maylan, Pa.	5 00	

P. R. R., Bridgehampton, N. Y..... 10 00
A. L. S., Ballston Spa, N. Y..... 2 50
C. E. R., East Billerica, Mass..... 5 00
——$ 32 50

Mount Hermon Boys' School:

E. S., Maylan, Pa.....$ 5 00
M. R. C., Lisbon, N. H..... 50 00
A. L. S., Ballston Spa, N. Y..... 2 50
——$ 57 50

Free Distribution of Record of Christian Work:

C. E. R., East Billerica, Mass.....$ 1 00

Miss Millard's Work for India's Blind Famine Sufferers:

A Friend.....$ 2 00

Personalia.

At the close of their work in Auburn, Ind., **Rev. Francis Edward Smiley,** with **Professor McKinsey,** as musical director, went to Kearney, Neb., to undertake a series of union evangelistic services.

Mr. L. P. Rowland recently closed a series of evangelistic meetings in connection with the churches of Siloam Springs, Ark. These were followed by a similar work at New Cambria, Mo. Mr. Rowland is open to engagements in any state of the Union.

Rev. Howard S. Bliss, who for the last five years has been pastor of the Christian Union Congregational Church at Upper Montclair, N. J., sailed on October 2 for Beirut, Syria, in order to become president of the American College, an office formerly held by his father, the Rev. Daniel Bliss.

Mr. George A. Hall, state secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association of New York, desires to call attention to the fact that the Association is specially anxious to secure the name and address of any young man changing his residence from one city or town to another. By notifying Mr. Hall at the Y. M. C. A. office, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York City, not only will a hearty welcome be extended to all such young men, but special effort made to surround them from the first with Christian influence. This applies not to New York alone but to every state in the Union.

Mr. William Ross, whose address at Northfield on mission work on the Congo aroused so deep an interest, is to visit America during the coming season. He purposes spending the months of February, March and April in visiting different cities addressing missionary gatherings and holding evangelistic missions. Mr. Ross was the pioneer missionary of the Baptist missionary society (England) to the Congo Valley and his addresses are full of thrilling incidents of his experiences. Letters addressed to Mr. Ross in care of the Evangelistic Bureau of the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK will be forwarded promptly.

Obituary.

A loss has been sustained in the passing away of that man of God, **F. W. Grant.** While best known among the Plymouth Brethren, to which section of the Church of Christ he belonged, he is nevertheless widely appreciated as the author of some dozen religious volumes, the most famous perhaps being his "Numerical Bible." This work alone is a monument of his scholarship. But the Christian world has been enriched by several other books from the pen of this keen student of the Word of God, all of which are characterized by that close acquaintance with the Bible which pertains to the Brethren. Grant on "Revelation" is one of the standard works on the apocalypse.

Northfield Extension Notes.

Rev. G. Campbell Morgan returned from England early in October and began a course of lectures at the Chicago Bible Institute October 8. For October and November he speaks daily at the Institute. The appointments as arranged for the season are as follows:—

November 29 to December 7, Washington, D. C.
December 14-21, Wilkesbarre, Pa.
January 4-15, Grand Rapids, Mich.
January 18 to February 1, St. Louis, Mo.
February 4-15, Cincinnati, Ohio.
February 17-24, Omaha, Neb.
March 1-10, Atlanta, Ga.

Rev. H. W. Pope spent the month of September in Chicago at the Bible Institute, going to Dayton, Ohio, early in October.

BIBLE NOTES

FOR

DAILY DEVOTIONS.

EDITED BY

REV. G. CAMPBELL MORGAN.

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Saturday, 1st. *John viii. 1 to 13.* The effect produced by the Lord's teaching is evident in this paragraph. The first verse shows how it had stirred up the opposition of the rulers. For six months, or thereabout, He had absented Himself from Jewry. The arrival of the Feast of Tabernacles was the occasion for the going up to Jerusalem of the multitudes, for in many respects this was the most popular of the feasts. The attitude of His brethren was that of cynical unbelief. They did not understand His tarrying in Galilee if His claims were what they seemed to be, and they urged Him to action. This is the opportune moment. Why should He not go with the multitudes and work some wonder, and so hasten the work He has in hand? Our Lord's answer revealed the fact that all this human impatience and haste was contrary to the Divine purpose. When He went it was quietly. His fame had spread so far and wide that the Jews were looking for Him, and He was the chief subject of interest. Opinions were divided, some maintaining that He was a good man, others that He was leading the multitudes astray. All this discussion was in whispers, an under current of agitation at the feast, for "no man spake openly of Him for fear of the Jews." Whether men understand Jesus or no, whether they side with Him or are against Him, this much is certain, He is such an One as to command interest. He must be considered!

From Marcus Dods:

Even before Jesus appeared at this feast He was the subject of much talk and exchange of opinions. The first characteristic of the popular mind, as exhibited here by John, is its subservience to authority. Those who had a favorable opinion of Jesus uttered it with reserve and caution, "for fear of the Jews"—that is, of the Jerusalem Jews, who were known to be adverse to His claims. And the authorities, knowing the subservience of the people, considered it a sufficient reply to the favorable reports brought them by their own officers, to say, "Have any of the rulers of the Pharisees believed in him?" This seems a very childish mode of settling a great question, and we are ready to charge the Jews with a singular lack of independence; but we reflect that among ourselves great questions are settled very much by authority still. In politics we take our cue from one or two newspapers, conducted by men who show themselves quite fallible; and in matters of even deeper moment, how many of us can say we have thought out a creed for ourselves, and have not accepted our ideas from recognized teachers? And whether these teachers be the accredited representatives of traditional theology, or have secured an audience by their departure from ordinary views, we have in our own conscience a surer guide to the truth about Christ. For much that we may build upon the foundation we must be indebted to others, but for that which is radical for the determination of the relation we ourselves are to hold to Christ, we must follow not authority, but our own conscience.

Sunday, 2nd. *John vii. 14 to 24.* At the right moment, acting, as always, quietly and yet with splendid courage, according to the Divine program, Jesus manifested Himself. It was at the midst of the feast, when the crowds were greatest and all matters were on the crest of the wave. He passed through the places of discussion and debate, on the market place and the street,

and proceeded to the central position, the temple, and assumed the position of authority as Teacher! The man of Galilee in the midst of the culture of Judaism taught, and the manner of His teaching created wonder. He spoke with the accent of culture, He had letters, and yet He had never learned. He accounted for what caused their wonder by declaring that He delivered the message sent by God, and then announced the true canon of criticism. If they willed to do the will of God as He was doing it, they would understand His teaching. Divine messages demand sympathetic interpretation. They can never be understood by those who are not willing to obey. He then charged them with violation of the Mosaic economy, and inferred that this accounted for their inability to comprehend Him. This He emphasized by an illustration. They sought to kill Him, and going back He traced their opposition to, and their attitude toward, Him, on account of the miracle wrought in the Bethesda porches on the Sabbath, while they, for another rite not instituted by Moses, violated that same Sabbath law. They lived in surface appearances, and not in the deeps of righteousness, hence their judgment was false.

From F. W. Robertson:

The condition of the beatific vision is a pure heart and life: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." To the impure, God is simply invisible. The condition annexed to a sense of God's presence—in other words, that without which a sense of God's presence cannot be—is obedience to the laws of love. "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." The conditions of spiritual wisdom and certainty in truth is obedience to the will of God, surrender of private will. "If any man do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

In every department of knowledge, therefore, there is an appointed "organ," or instrument, for discovery of its specific truth, and for appropriating its specific blessings. In the world of sense, the empirical intellect: in that world the Baconian philosopher is supreme. His *Novum Organon* is experience: he knows by experiments of touch, sight, sound, etc. The religious man may not contravene his assertions: he is lord in his own province. But in the spiritual world the "organ" of the scientific man —sensible experience—is powerless. If the chemist, geologist, physiologist come back from their spheres and say, We find in the laws of affinity, in the deposits of past ages, in the structure of the human frame no trace or token of a God, I simply reply, I never expected you would. Obedience and self-surrender is the sole organ by which we gain a knowledge of that which cannot be seen, nor felt. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." And just as by copying perpetually a master painter's works we get at last an instinctive and infallible power of recognizing his touch, so by copying and doing God's will will we recognize what is His. We know of the teaching whether it be of God, or whether it be an arbitrary invention of a human self.

Monday, 3rd. *John vii. 35, 36.* Some of the inhabitants of the city expressed their wonder that seeing that this was the Man the rulers sought to kill, they yet said nothing to Him. This was wonderful indeed, for it manifested His perfect security in His Father's will against all opposition until the right moment arrived. Twice in this paragraph the effort was made to arrest Him, but without success. He was in perfect safety in the midst of the powerful and persistent enmity of His foes, until His final word had been spoken, and their inward corruption had been outwardly expressed in the rejection of all His teaching, and opposition to all His purpose. Then He did not look at their apparent victory, but at the completion of His own. He did not say, "Yet a little while I am with you, and then you shall arrest Me and cast Me out," but "Yet a little while I am with you, and *I go unto him that sent me.*" His going was also to be in the march of His purpose to accomplish the will of His Father. To such as Jesus, secondary causes were unrecognized. All the pathway was Divinely ordained, and none could hinder the progress. The very methods of their madness will contribute to His triumph, and the loss will be theirs, not His, for presently they who now were so impotently anxious to be rid of Him will as ineffectually seek Him. Oh, that in the measure possible to us by eating His flesh and drinking His blood, we may share this life of conscious power.

From Alexander Maclaren:

Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while I am with you—one saying with two

meanings. No greater contrast can be conceived than between these two groups. The one consists of the officers sent to seize Christ, but they were restrained by an awe inexplicable even to themselves. The other consists of the little company of His faithful though slow scholars. Hatred animated the one, love the other.

Christ speaks to them both nearly the same words, but with that different tone, meaning, and application. To the officers they exhibit the triumphant confidence that their Maker is omnipotent. When He wills He will go, not be dragged, to a safe asylum, where foes cannot follow Him. The officers do not understand. They think that, bad Jew as they have always believed Him to be, He may consummate His apostasy by going over to the Gentiles altogether; but at any rate they feel that He is going to escape their hands. The disciples understand little more, and, though the upper edge of the saying seems to be full of separation, there is an underside that suggests reunion. The words are nearly the same, but they are not quite identical. The enemies are told that they will never find Him. No man with hostile intent seeking Christ can ever find Him. All the antagonism that has stormed against Him and His cause has been impotent and vain. The pursuers are like dogs chasing a bird which all the while carols in the sky. As in the days of His flesh His foes could not touch His person till He chose, so ever since no weapon that is formed against His cause or His friends shall prosper. All Christian service is a prolongation of Christ's, and both are immortal and safe.

Tuesday, 4th. *John vii. 37 to 52.* During seven days of the feast at the hour of morning sacrifice, water from Siloam was carried in a golden vessel and poured out in memory of the water which had been miracuously supplied in connection with the exodus, and as symbolizing the nation's hope of the fulfillment of the promises so often made (Ez. xlvii. 1-12; Joel iii. 18). In all likelihood this carrying of water was omitted on the last day, and this lends deeper significance to Christ's action. He, in words that are unmistakable, claims the fulfillment through Himself of all that was symbolized by the river of the wilderness (1 Cor. x. 4) and all that had been promised by the prophets. He was the Rock, through Whose smiting there should flow the River of the Spirit, for the satisfaction of all personal thirst, and in its overflow, through satisfied souls, for the blessing of those without. Standing thus in the midst of symbolism, He called men to Himself, to find in Him the fulfillment of all their hopes and aspirations for life and service. What an effect He was producing, multitudes discussing and disagreeing; rulers plotting to end His life; officers influenced by His teaching and failing to carry out their orders; one voice (that of Nicodemus) raised on the side of law and order. Over all that wonderful power, restraining the opposition of men that He might finish His work, for "no man laid hands on him."

From C. H. Spurgeon:

Do you ask me again, "What is this thirst"? Thirst is nothing actual, or substantive; it is a lack, a want, crying out of its emptiness. It is the absence of the necessary. Sinner, thou needest not look for any good thing in thyself; the thirst which is sought for is the absence of a good thing. Thirst is a painful need. Hast thou no needs? Thirst is an emptiness, a vacuum; it is the miss of that which is essential to life. Hast thou no such a miss? Thirst is conscious need, conscious to a painful degree; hast thou not this? This sense of need is thy thirst. The need naturally begets a pain. When our system needs drink, a merciful providence creates a pang so that we are driven to take notice that a requisite of life must be immediately supplied. Thirst rings the alarm-bell, and the mind and body set to work to supply the urgent demand. It were a dreadful thing if the system needed water and yet did not thirst; for we might be fatally injured before we knew that any harm was happening to us. The pain of thirst is a salutary warning that something very important is wanted. Now, soul, if thou art suffering from fear or despondency; if thou endurest heaviness of heart and disquietude of spirit; if thou hast a longing, a sighing, a pining after something better and holier, then thou art thirsty. If thou hast this thirst in any measure or degree, thou art bidden to come to Christ and drink. If thou hast not as yet a burning thirst, nor a fever, but if thou hast any sort of thirst, thou mayest come and drink.

Wednesday, 5th. *John vii. 53 to viii. 11.* This arrangement of the paragraph in the Revised Version is undoubtedly the correct one, and how pathetic is the fact revealed by bringing into close relation the closing verse of chapter seven with the first of chapter eight. "Every man went unto his own house." "Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives." He had no home of His own. He was houseless and homeless in the world He made, and among the people He loved unto death. And yet how

sacred the retirement; He went without a doubt to communion with His Father, and there on Olivet in splendid solitude He passed the night with God. Nothing is told us of that night, and it is not well to dogmatize, but I venture to think that He slept, lulled by the wind that breathes where it listeth, safe from all intrusion, while His Father soothed His humanity into the undisturbed quiet of deep slumber. Some will object, and claim that the night was passed in wakefulness and prayer. Perhaps it was so, but I have other thoughts of the absolute rest of a soul devoted to God's will. The scene in the temple in the early morning is very beautiful. Yes, the woman was taken in the act, but there are so many guilty of acts who are not taken. These have no right to exercise the sword of judgment. Undetected crime has no authority to cast stones at crime detected. He is the sinless One, and as it seems to me, in the right of a coming mystery of atonement He does not condemn. He came not for condemnation, but for salvation.

From Joseph Hall:

These scribes and Pharisees were noted for extraordinary and admired holiness: the outside of their lives was not only inoffensive, but saint-like and exemplary. Yet that all-seeing eye of the Son of God, which "found folly in the angels," hath much more found wickedness in these glorious professors. It is not for nothing that His eyes are like a flame of fire. What secret is there which He searches not? Retire yourselves, O ye foolish sinners, into your inmost closets, into the center of the earth, His eye follows you, and observes all your carriages; no bolt, no bar, no darkness can keep Him out! No thief was ever so impudent as to steal in the very face of the judge. O God, let me see myself seen by Thee, and I shall not dare offend Thee!

Besides notice, here is exprobation. These men's sins, as they had been secret, so they were forgotten. It is long since they were done; neither did they think to have heard any news of them. And now, when time and security had quite worn them out of thought, He, That shall once be their Judge, calls them to the back-reckoning.

One time or other shall that just God lay our sins in the dust, and make us possess the sins of our youth. "These things thou didst, and I kept silence: and thou thoughtest I was like unto thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thee." The penitent man's sin lies before him for his humiliation; the impenitent's for his shame and confusion. The act of sin is transient, not so the guilt; that will stick by us, and return upon us, either in the height of our security, or the depth of our misery, when we shall be least able to bear it. How just may it be with God to take us at advantage, and then to lay His arrest upon us when we are laid up upon a former suit!

Thursday, 6th. *John viii. 12 to 20.* This is a continuation of the line of thought broken off for the introduction of the narrative of the woman. Here again we have a claim that the Master made for Himself which is splendid in its magnificence. He is Light in a twofold sense, essential and communicated. Nothing can be more arresting than the words, "I am the light of the world." Darkness is everywhere, and men, made for light, are groping in it, asking the way, stumbling over hidden rocks, and plunging into all kinds of perils. In the midst of it all a great Light falls upon the darkness, revealing at once the perils and the pathway. This light is for men, but it will only avail as men walk in it. That there may be no misunderstanding of His meaning Christ puts it immediately into another form. To *follow Him* is to have the light of life. Himself believed in, His will obeyed, His example followed, then men shall grope no longer in darkness, but walk in light. The Pharisees raised no objection to the claim in itself, but refused to believe it because He spoke of Himself. To this He replied that His witness was true, for He knew His pathway, whence He came, and whither He went, and to follow therefore was to walk after One Who was certain, and not after suppositions. By contrast He charged them with the darkness of ignorance. Yet again mark the restraining power of God protecting Him, *"no man took him."*

From Marcus Dods:

God's people were not led by a road already made and used, and which they could have studied from beginning to end on a map before starting; but they were led day by day, and step by step, by a living guide, who chose a route never before trodden. In the morning they did not know whether they were to go forward or back, or to stay where they were. They had to wait in ignorance till their guiding pillar moved, and follow in ignorance till it halted. Our passage through life is similar. It is not a chart we are promised, but a guide.

We cannot tell where next year or next month may be spent. We are not informed of any part of our future, and have no means of ascertaining the emergencies which may try us, the new ingredients which may suddenly be thrown into our life, and reveal in us what till now has lain hidden and dormant. We cannot tell by what kind of path we shall be led onwards to our end; and our security from day to day consists not at all in this, that we can penetrate the future and see no dangers in it, but our security is that we shall always be guided by infallible and loving wisdom. We have learned a chief article of human wisdom if we have learned to leave to-morrow to God and faithfully follow Him to-day. A road as it lies in the distance often looks impassably steep, but as we approach and walk it step by step, we find it almost level and fairly easy.

Friday, 7th. *John viii. 21 to 30.* With startling words it seems as though the Lord were set upon arousing the consciences of these people. He warned them that they would die in their sins, declared that they were from beneath, that they were of this world, and attracted their attention to Himself by putting Himself into contrast with them. He was going where they could not come because of their sins, He was from above, He was not of this world. Thus with warnings and declarations of the high nature of His work, He lured them, and yet they seem to have been far more occupied with the speculative aspect of His sayings, than with any application of His teaching to life and conduct. Then He told them of a day coming beyond His lifting up, when they would recognize the truth of the claims He has made concerning Himself. In a great statement here He laid bare the facts concerning Himself. He is working in perpetual harmony with His Father, and His Father has not left Him alone. The proof of His union lies in the fact that He does the things pleasing to God. Then many believed on Him. This is very wonderful. If we would know how wonderful, let us try to imagine any other teacher making such a statement. The inevitable result would be cessation of confidence. With Him it was the cause of belief. He can never be accounted for as all other men.

From C. H. Spurgeon:

The first "believed on him"; these are the right kind. What is it to believe on Christ? It means not only to accept what He says as true, and to believe that He is the Messiah and the Son of God, but trustfully to rest in Him. To believe on Him is to take Him as the ground of our hopes, as our Saviour, upon Whom we depend for salvation. When we believe in Him or on Him, we accept Him as God sets Him forth; and we make use of Him by trusting on Him to do for us what God has appointed Him to do. This trusting on Jesus is saving faith. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." To believe Him may be a very different thing from believing on Him. Such belief may fall far short of saving faith. To believe on Him means heartily to give yourself up to Him, and to follow Him as the Way, the Truth, and the Life to you. Rejecting all rival confidences, the heart leans on Jesus all its weight, and leaves Him with all its burdens. Believing in Him, we repose all our concerns, for time and eternity, in His hands. To believe on Him is also to believe implicitly. We believe all that He may yet say. We accept not only what He says which we can fully understand, but that which as yet is dark to us. We so believe in Him that we go with Him in all His teachings, be they what they may. We not only go as far as He has hitherto revealed Himself to us, but we are prepared to go as much farther as He pleases. What He says is truth to us, on the sole evidence that He says it.

Saturday, 8th. *John viii. 31 to 47.* The Lord declares the conditions of true discipleship to those who have believed Him, as to responsibility and result. The responsibility is marked by the simple injunction, "Abide in my word." The result is indicated first as intelligence, "Ye shall know the truth," and then as freedom, "the truth shall make you free." How remarkable and yet how sublime the law of life herein revealed. It is to be wholly conditioned in His word. Where it is so, there will follow an ever enlarging capacity for, and apprehension of truth. That abiding will issue in the perfect freedom of the disciple. In this statement there was an inference of the bondage of these people, which they resented by denying that they were slaves. To this objection the Master answered that all sinners are servants of sin, and that bond-servants have no permanent place in the house. Only the son who is free abides. Indirectly He claimed for Himself this position of Sonship, and then declared that He by making them free from sin would

ensure their permanence also. They in turn repeated their boast of relation to Abraham. He denied the relation because of their actions. They then claimed relationship to God, and this in searching words He also denied, showing that there are but two relationships in the spiritual realm, and that all men are children of God or children of the devil. Their refusal of the Son proves that they are not of God, but of Satan.

From F. W. Robertson:

Cultivate the truth. I do not mean veracity; that is another thing. Veracity is the correspondence between a proposition and a man's belief. Truth is the correspondence of a proposition with fact. The love of truth is the love of realities—the determination to rest upon facts, and not semblances. Take an illustration of the way in which the habit of cultivating the truth is got. Two boys see a misshapen, hideous object in the dark. One goes up to the cause of his terror, examines it, learns what it is; he knows the truth, and the truth has made him free. The other leaves it in mystery and unexplained vagueness, and is a slave for life to superstitious and indefinite terrors. Romance, prettiness, "dim religious light," awe and mystery—these are not the atmosphere of Christ's gospel of liberty. Base the heart on facts. The truth alone can make you free.

See what a Christian is. Our society is divided into two classes—those who are daring, inquisitive, but restrained by no reverence, and kept back by little religion; those who may be called religious: but, with all their excellencies, we cannot help feeling that the elements of their character are feminine rather than masculine, and that they have no grasp or manly breadth, that their hold is on feeling rather than on truth.

Sunday, 9th. *John viii. 48 to 59.* Evidently angry by the Lord's classification of them, they retort in kind that He has a devil, and after some further conversation prove that they are conscious of the logical issue of all that the Master is saying by asking Him a question, "Whom makest thou thyself?" It is evident to them that He is taking some position of superiority to Abraham, and in response to their question He emphatically declares His superiority by saying what must have been a most incomprehensible thing to men who looked upon Him only as One of themselves. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad." In astonishment they propound the second question, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" His reply is perhaps the climax of His self-revelation as to personality. He distinctly affirms, "Before Abraham was, I am," thus taking and using the expression which indicates His proper Deity. He did not say, "Before Abraham was, I was." That would have marked priority, but in the use of the words "I am," He appropriates to Himself a statement which lays claim to essential Being. It is a declaration of permanent existence from which the time element is eliminated. There can be no escape from the claim of Deity as herein set forth. That they so understood it is evidenced by the fact that they took up stones to cast at Him. He responded to their unbelief by demonstrating His Deity in the act of hiding Himself, and passing from their midst unseen.

From Marcus Dods:

The rejection of Jesus by the Jews was, therefore, due to their moral condition. Their condition is such that our Lord does not scruple pungently to say, "Ye are of your father, the devil." Their blindness to the truth and virulent opposition to Him proved their kinship with him who was from the beginning a liar and a murderer. They are so completely under the influence of sin that they are unable to appreciate emancipation from it. They look for satisfaction so determinedly in an anti-spiritual direction that they are positively enraged at One Who certainly has power, but Who steadfastly uses it for spiritual purposes. Out of this condition they can be rescued by believing in Christ. Into the mystery which surrounds the possibility that such a belief would be cherished by any one in this condition, our Lord does not here enter. That it is possible He implies by blaming them for not believing.

Monday, 10th. *John ix. 1 to 12.* This is the first stage in a narrative full of interest and beauty. The circumstances create as we shall see the opportunity for a new departure which is most remarkable and far-reaching. His disciples approach Him with a problem concerning the man born blind. Some of their conceptions of life are evident in their question. They consider that limitation is punishment, and that punishment is retributive. The man's blindness proves sin. Their difficulty is to discover whose sin it is that is so punished. The

form of their question presents an interesting inference. They seem to have held a view, not uncommon at the time, that men had some preëxistence, and suffered in this life for sins committed before it began, for they supposed that it was possible that the punishment of blindness from birth was due to some sin he had himself committed. It is interesting to notice that Christ neither corrected nor affirmed that view, save as He denied their thought that all such limitation was the result of immediate sin. If they came to Him with a problem, He answered them with a great revelation. The limitation of life evident in the blindness of the man was an opportunity for the display of the works of God. Then, in keeping with the claim of Deity made but recently to the Jews, He declared that He must work the works of Him that sent Him. The works referred to here are evidently those which are to be displayed in the realm of human limitation, such as that of blindness from birth. He proceeds immediately to that work, and restores the man his sight. Differences of opinion arise concerning the man, and he, beset with questions, contents himself with declaring the fact of his previous blindness and present sight.

From Joseph Hall:

Never did Jesus move one foot but to purpose. He passed by, but so as that His virtue stayed; so did He pass by that His eye was fixed. The blind man could not see Him, He sees the blind man. His goodness prevents us, and yields better supplies to our wants. He saw compassionately, not shutting His eyes, nor turning them aside, but bending them upon that dark and disconsolate object. That which was said of the sun is much more true of Him that made it: "Nothing is hid from his light"; but of all other things, miseries, especially of His own, are most intentively eyed of Him. Could we be miserable unseen, we had reason to be heartless. O Saviour, why should we not imitate Thee in this merciful improvement of our senses? Woe be to those eyes that care only to gaze upon their own beauty, bravery, wealth; not abiding to glance upon the sore of Lazarus, the sorrows of Joseph, the dungeon of Jeremy, the blind beggar at the gate of the temple!

The disciples see the blind man, too, but with different eyes: our Saviour for pity and cure, they for expostulation: "Master, who did sin; this man or his parents, that he is born blind?" I like well that whatsoever doubt troubled them, they straightway vent it into the ear of their Master.

Tuesday, 11th. *John ix. 13 to 34.* The case arouses great interest, and the man is now brought before the Pharisees. In reply to their question he repeats the fact of his healing. The envy in their hearts against Jesus is manifested by the fact that they are prepared to discount the value of the miracle, because it had been performed upon the Sabbath day, and to argue from that fact that Jesus was a sinner. They appealed to the man for his opinion, and he expressed it in the simple statement, "He is a prophet." Calling in the parents, the discussion proceeds with the result that they urge the man to give God the praise, announcing that this Man must be a sinner. It is very beautiful to notice how this man gains strength as he bears testimony, until at last with quiet irony he suggests that their interest may be based upon their desire for discipleship, and finally rebukes their blindness and proclaims his conviction that the fact of his healing disproves their contention that Christ is a sinner. This rouses all their anger, and they cast him out. His loyalty to conscience and conviction has cost him his relationship as a member of the synagogue, and he is now seen an excommunicated man.

From Joseph Parker:

Here is Christ creating personal witnesses. The man said: "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not,"—I am not a metaphysician,—"one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind now I see,"—I, the very man, myself,—look at me; I am not speaking about some man a thousand miles off. There are some persons who are very much afraid of egotism—they are the greatest egotists in the world. You find a man who writes in the newspaper about some other man that he is "awfully egotistic," and you may be sure he dipped his pen in the inkhorn of his own infirmity. This man said, "I was blind, now I see." There is a heroic egotism, there is a grateful egotism, there is an egotism of pure, sincerest thankfulness for blessings received, and if a man should prove himself to be awfully humble by speaking of himself in the plural number, let him do it. It is a singular pride that gives a man the right of plurality, talking about himself under the nomenclature "we." A suspicious humility! Suspicious? Let that word be withdrawn, and another take its place—a proved hypocrisy!

Wednesday, 12th. *John ix. 35 to 38.* The history of the blind man moves a step for-

ward, and this brief paragraph contains that which is a very beautiful revelation of the Saviour's heart, and marks a new departure in His method, of the uttermost importance. Remembering the position of the man as the result of his defence of Christ as against the criticism of the Pharisees, the interest of the Lord in him, and His action concerning him are alike full of beauty. He heard that he was cast out. He found him. He revealed Himself to him, and received his worship. No man has ever suffered ostracism or excommunication for the sake of Christ but that the Lord has found him, and it may as certainly be asserted that in the finding of such an one by Christ there was infinitely more than compensation for all the loss sustained. But the paragraph is of greater importance than this. The blind man was the first of a great company, and the action of Jesus was the institution of a new order of things. As we have seen, Judaism has criticised Him, debated with Him, and practically already rejected Him. To Him, outside, there comes this man, and the Lord takes His position as the new Center, and receives the worship. From this point onward His teaching and His attitude are in harmony with this action.

From A. B. Grosart:

"Faith must lay hold on Christ." Look at that locomotive as it snorts like a giant war-horse in its place in the station at the head of the train. You have in that engine power of amplest capacity to drag at swiftest pace the far-stretching cars. Boilers, tubes, pistons, fire, steam—all are in perfect order; and that broad-browed man gives assurance of tried ability to guide the charge committed to him. You look: carriage after carriage is filled, the hour has struck, the bell rung; and yet there is no departure, no movement, nor would be till "crack of doom," if one thing remained as it now is. Aha! the lack is discovered; the uniting hooks that bind engine and train together were wanting. They have been supplied. Like two great hands they have clasped; and a screw has so riveted engine and carriage that they form, as it were, one thing, one whole; and away through the dark sweeps the heavy-laden train with its freight of immortals! Mark! no one ever supposes that it is the uniting hoop, or link, or coupling that draws the train. A child knows that it is the engine that draws it. Nevertheless, without that hook, or link, or coupling, all the power of the engine were of no avail; the train would stand still forever. Exactly so is it in the relation of faith to Christ. It is not our faith that saves us, but Christ.

Thursday, 13th. *John ix. 39 to x. 6.* Immediately after the action considered in the previous paragraph, our Lord begins to teach in the light of that significant new departure. He first declares that for judgment He came into the world. That is not to say that He came to judge the world, but to be the criterion and separating One, the One by Whom God would judge, and He proceeds to explain the statement, by saying that the result of His coming would be that those who did not see might see, and that they who see may become blind. Here He is referring to His miracle and teaching the spiritual truth concerning it. He immediately assumes the authoritative and oracular position, and in the first six verses of the tenth chapter we have a prophetic parable, a picture of the new order, the first step toward which had been taken in His finding of the excommunicated man, and the reception of worship. In this first statement there are no details, but a general hinting at, and outlining of, the coming order. There is to be a fold, having a door. There is to be a flock, having a Shepherd. Entrance to the fold is to be by the door. The flock will know and follow the Shepherd. Then it is written that "they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them."

From J. Louis Spencer:

The presence of the Lord is real in the blessed sacrament of the altar, but unless the Porter openeth, His presence is not real to us. Many thronged around Him, but only one poor woman touched Him and was healed; so at the altar the virtue to heal is there, but the power to draw it into our soul's health is to the heart touched by the breath of the Spirit—to him the Porter openeth! So it is with the words of absolution—they pass along with a sound and leave no blessing behind unless the Porter openeth. And so it is with the Bible—we read our Bibles, but unless the Porter openeth, the voices of the evangelists and apostles are but as a pleasant tale; listened to, but soon forgotten, or they are like "the idle wind that we regard not"! And then there is that other book—the book of Nature—which lies open before us. But we hear no sounds in the noisy brook, we see nothing in the opening buds and flowers of

early summer; but once the Porter opens the door, then suddenly, "Earth 's crammed with heaven, and every common bush afire with God." Or if we look upon the pages of history. To the natural man they contain only a record of battles lost and won, a long succession of kings, some good, some bad, of dynasties set up or hurled to the ground; but when the Porter opens wide the door, and the light falls upon the pages, then we seem to read between the lines. We see how evil haunts the wicked person or destroys him and his seed forever, we see men sowing the wind and in after years, long after the sowing has faded from the memory, reaping the whirlwind!

Friday, 14th. *John x. 7 to 21.* The "therefore" of the seventh verse shows that what follows in the teaching of Jesus results from the failure of men to understand His general statement concerning the new order, and in this section we have a somewhat detailed explanation of that picture. It may be said that the whole teaching gathers round two principal statements of the Lord. "I am the door," "I am the good shepherd." Entrance upon the new order is to be through Him. Of the fold He is the door. Sustenance and government within the order is to be through Him. Of the flock He is the Shepherd. The interrelation of these two great facts is very wonderful. Entrance to the new order is to be through the door, and in connection with that statement He declares, "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly," so that the entrance is to be by the gateway of a new life. Having made this statement He adds: "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep," so that the sustenance of the flock, and its principle of life or law, is also to be that of His life laid down, taken again, and communicated to them. Remembering that this whole movement proceeds from the climax of His claims, when He used of Himself the very title of Deity, saying, "I am," it is interesting to notice that in the new order He links that title with words that indicate the lines of that order, "I am the door," "I am the good shepherd." Thus by sublime inference He not only claims His own personal Deity, but declares the Divinity of this new movement. The twenty-first verse records that which was to be expected. Such a teaching again caused division.

From F. W. Robertson:

And thus there grows up between the man and the dumb creature he protects, a kind of friendship. For this is, after all, the true school in which love is taught—dangers mutually shared and hardships borne together; these are the things which make generous friendship—risk cheerfully encountered for another's sake. You love those for whom you risk, and they love you; therefore it is that, not as here where the flock is driven, the shepherd goes before and the sheep follow him. They follow in perfect trust, even though he should be leading them away from a green pasture, by a rocky road to another pasture which they cannot yet see. He knows them all—their separate histories, their ailments, their characters.

Now let it be observed how much in all this connection there is of heart—of real, personal attachment, almost inconceivable to us. It is strange how deep the sympathy may become between the higher and the lower being; nay, even between the being that has life and what is lifeless. Alone almost in the desert, the Arab and his horse are one family. Alone in those vast solitudes, with no human being near, the shepherd and the sheep feel a life in common. Differences disappear, the vast interval between the man and the brute; the single point of union is felt strongly. One is the love of the protector; the other the love of the grateful life; and so between lives so distant there is woven by night and day, by summer suns and winter frosts, a living network of sympathy. The greater and the less mingle their being together; they feel each other. "The shepherd knows his sheep, and is known of them."

Saturday, 15th. *John x. 22 to 42.* It was winter, and the Master walked in the sheltered porch of Solomon, a very beautiful touch, revealing the humanity of Jesus amid teaching that flames with the splendors of His Divinity. While walking there, the Jews asked for some definite pronouncement. In reply He refers them first to what He has already told them, reminding them that they did not believe Him; and then to the works that they had seen, which they also refused to believe. He then in a few words of great beauty restates the facts of the new order, first as to the relation existing between the flock and the Shepherd; and then as to the relation between each and His Father, concluding with a sublime declaration which is a revelation of the authority of His teaching and His action. "I and my Father are one." Again their opposition flamed forth, and manifested it-

self in their actual taking up of stones to cast at Him. By that wonderful power Whose working we noticed in the earlier parts of the gospel, they were restrained from the act while He restated His proof of all He taught, as being found in the works that He did. And yet again we have a picture of their impotent rage, and of His marvelous power in the words "they sought again to take him: and he went forth out of their hand." Turning His back upon the temple, He left them and passed over Jordan. Again cast out by unbelief, and there is a repetition on a larger scale of the going out to Him of those who were seeking for truth and were sincere in their search. The growth of the new order is revealed in the words with which this chapter closes, "And many believed on him there."

From Marcus Dods:

No doubt that which lodges in the heart of each of us, the conviction that Christ is Divine, is the general aspect of His life, and the attitude He assumes towards men and towards God. We may not be able to understand in what sense there are Three Persons in the Godhead, and may be disposed with Calvin to wish that theological terms and distinctions had never become necessary. We may be unable to understand how if Christ were a complete Person before the incarnation, the humanity He assumed could also be complete and similar to our own. But notwithstanding such difficulties, which are the necessary result of our inability to comprehend the Divine nature, we are convinced, when we follow Christ through His life and listen to His own assertions, that there is in Him something unique and unapproached among men, that while He is one of us He yet looks at us also from the outside, from above. We feel that He is Master of all, that nothing in nature or in life can defeat Him; that while dwelling in time, He is also in eternity, seeing before and after. The most stupendous claims He makes are somehow justified; assertions which in other lips would be blasphemous are felt to be just and natural in His. It is felt that somehow, even if we cannot say how, God is in Him.

Sunday, 16th. *John xi. 1 to 6.* An important crisis is now reached in the ministry of Jesus. In this chapter we have a detailed account of the last sign which He gave, and it culminates, as we shall see, in the pronounced hostility of His foes, and their determined attempt to encompass His destruction. While bearing this in mind, it is as a revelation of the heart and method of Jesus that the chapter is of perennial interest. Lazarus is sick. The sisters are in trouble. In their sorrow their hearts turn instinctively to the One Who has been the welcome Guest in their home, and Who has been their best Friend. A messenger is despatched to acquaint Him with the fact of His friend's sickness. His reception of the news startles us. First, it is evident that He knows and understands, for He declares that the sickness is not unto death, that is to say, that death is not its finality. Having said this, He tarries, and we are perplexed. Yet notice the account of His tarrying that the story is prefaced by the statement of the fact that He "loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." Now it was because of Jesus' love for Lazarus that they had sent for Him (see verse 3), and yet it is His love that makes Him tarry. We shall be helped to an explanation of the mystery by remembering that the word by which they described and thought of the Lord's love for Lazarus is the word φιλεω, while the word which is used to declare the Lord's love in verse 5 is αγαπαω. Here already we have light upon His tarrying. A purely human affection would have hurried, but the strong, clear, Divine affection, based upon perfect understanding, tarried.

From Joseph Hall:

It was a stirring message that Mary sent to Jesus, "He whom thou lovest is sick"; as if she would imply that His part was no less deep in Lazarus than hers. Neither does she say, He that loves Thee is sick; but "He whom thou lovest"; not pleading the merit of Lazarus' affections to Christ, but the mercy and favor of Christ to him. Even that other reflection of love to him had been no weak motive; for, O Lord, Thou hast said, "Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him!" Thy goodness will not be behind us for love, who professeth to love them that love Thee. But yet the argument is more forcible from Thy love to us, since Thou hast just reason to respect everything of Thine own, more than ought that can proceed from us. Even we weak men, where can we stick at when we love? Thou, O infinite God, art love itself! Whatever Thou hast done for us is out of Thy love; the ground and motive of all Thy mercies is within Thyself, not in us, and if there be aught in us worthy of Thy love, it is Thine own, not ours; Thou givest what Thou acceptest. Jesus well heard the first groan of His dear

Lazarus; every short breath that he drew, every sigh that he gave was upon account; yet this Lord of life lets His Lazarus sicken, and languish, and die, not out of neglect or impotence, but out of power and resolution.

Monday, 17th. *John xi. 7 to 16.* Now the Lord proposes to turn His face toward Judæa, and therefore toward the sorrowing sisters. He ever times His coming in infinite wisdom, and in deepest love. The disciples are terribly afraid that there is danger to Him in this proposed return to Judæa, and they raise their protest. There is quiet dignity and the evidence of calmness of spirit in His answer. He declares in effect that the day will suffice for the work, that the work is not yet accomplished, and the day is not yet ended. It is a revelation of His own consciousness of the fact that we have seen again and again, that His foes are utterly powerless to touch Him until the proper moment has arrived. He then told them that the object of His coming was to waken Lazarus out of sleep. In these words there is revealed His estimate of death for all such as love Him. It is a sleep. His disciples had not yet learned this lesson, and had no thought that He referred to death, as is witnessed by their statement that if he slept he should do well. Without any tinge of rebuke, the Lord now uses the language of their incompleteness, telling them that Lazarus is dead. While all this is going forward, what of the sisters? There had been the weary fight with sickness, and then the terrible defeat, as the life of their loved one had slowly ebbed away, and at last the solemn silence, and the desolate home, while added to the terrible experience was the strange mystery of the absence of the Master.

From John Ker:

You who would have Him never suffer the tears of His people to fall,—who would wish Him to heal His friends as soon as they are sick, or raise them to life the instant they die,—reflect what you ask. You would lead men to seek Him, not from the love they bear Himself, but from their desire for His outward benefits, and would create, in your impatience, a world of formalism and hypocrisy,—the very world which God disproved in the face of Satan when He said, "Doth Job fear God for nought?" But God defers the time for interposition—makes all things outwardly come alike to all, and causes calamity and death to visit impartially the homes of His friends—in order that He may sift men's characters and prepare them for the day of judgment. Those who would have Christ interpose immediately against death mistake entirely the structure of the world we are placed in. To be consistent, they should go back and remonstrate against the creation of responsible agents, and the possibility of sin which flows from it. Death is the consequence of many things, and it is at the same time a veil let down over the face of God's throne, to hide spiritual things from the eyes of sense, and to make faith the instrument of the soul's recovery and training. *Death cannot be abolished until the history of this world is completed.*

Tuesday, 18th. *John xi. 17 to 27.* At last, four days too late, as it would seem, the news reaches the house of mourning that Jesus is approaching, and in this section we see Martha. Leaving the house, she hastens to meet Him, and in the first words she addresses to Him we have a very remarkable revelation of her attitude toward her Lord. Her disappointment expresses itself in complaint, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Her confidence expressed itself in her assertion, "Even now I know that whatsoever thou shalt ask of God, God will give thee." Her limitation expressed itself incidentally, but none the less clearly in the words she used concerning Him. "Whatsoever thou shalt ask," and the word ask (αἰτέω) is a word that Jesus often made use of when speaking of the praying of His disciples, but never of His own. It suggests the asking a favor; while He always spoke of His relation to God as that rather of communion or fellowship, based upon perfect equality. The Lord seems to ignore the complaint and the blunder, and to answer only the confidence by reminding Martha of the inspired truth, that of the resurrection, "Thy brother shall rise again." To this she replied that she knew he would rise at the last day, and it is evident that there is the thought in her heart of how little comfort for the present desolation there was in such anticipation. Then the Lord surcharged the dark clouds that were round about her with the light of a new and marvelous revelation, ending by asking her if she believed. She seemed to be bewildered, and yet silenced. Her Lord affirming her belief, she affirms the faith she has, faith in

Him, and this faith is all He really asks, for even though it cannot intelligently take hold upon all He says, it is the condition of discipleship, and must issue in the enlargement of faith, with the increase of understanding.

From Joseph Parker:

It is just the speech that Martha would make. We find—so true is it that extremes meet—that when Jesus came into the house Mary made precisely the same speech to Him. It was a speech of love, yet of ignorance. It was a speech of trust, and yet a speech that arose from want of a right understanding of divine power and divine relationship. Hear the words, "If thou hadst been here." She limited the Holy One of Israel; she assigned locality to the Saviour. As yet she had not entered into the meaning of the words, "Lo, I am with you alway!" Nor do I wonder at her not doing so. The full revelation of the Spirit had not been given; the entire purpose of the scheme of mediation had not been revealed and applied. Martha did just what we ourselves, under similar circumstances, would have done. What have we now to do? To learn this: The presence is not bodily; that the presence is not formal; that the Son of God is here, though I see Him not. "For wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I." May two or three not be gathered together in His name in the house of affliction? Yea, verily so. The afflicted ones are standing by the bedside, and they are one in their earnest desire that Christ would interpose —and Christ is there, if the desire arise from a penitent and believing heart. Then why does He not heal the sick one? Healing! Knowest thou what thou sayest when that word escapes thy tongue? What is healing? He is healed who dies. He who lives is patched up for a moment. Death is healing. We do so suffer by the narrowness of our interpretations. We put such small meanings upon words. When your dear little child is breathing its last you said, "Oh, that it might be healed!" And when the last breath went out of it, it was healed! You said, "Dead"; the angels said, "Born." "Healed! Plagued, you mean; more keenly tried, you mean; tossed about more violently in the world, you mean." They are healed whom He takes. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat; and the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Wednesday, 19th. *John xi. 28 to 37.* If to Martha in feverish perplexity He revealed the power and undoubted victory, to Mary, quiet even in the midst of sorrow, He revealed the cost to Himself of the victory yet to be won. Mary had remained in the house until Martha, bearing the message of Jesus, called her. Then she arose quickly, and passed to meet her Lord. Falling at His feet where Martha had stood erect, she uttered the same words, and yet how evidently with different intonation. This is proved by the effect produced upon the Lord, for He ever replies to what the condition demands. Martha's agonized perplexity called for teaching. Mary's surging but submissive sorrow asked for sympathy, and this is supplied by a remarkable revelation of what the blessing He is about to bestow cost Him. Three stages of revelation are here present. "He groaned in the Spirit," He "was troubled," or more correctly, He troubled Himself. "Jesus wept." Without entering into detailed argument, which would be out of place in these notes, it may be simply stated that the groaning spirit was the evidence of our Lord's consciousness of the evil that had issued in death, and all the agony associated with it. Then He troubled Himself. Here is surely hinted His voluntary identification of Himself with the sorrow, and even more, with the sin, and its penalty. This sense of sin, and identification was not only the secret of His power to abolish death, but issued in that perfect sympathy which He expressed in tears.

From Joseph Hall:

There is a time when we must preach Christ on the house-top; there is a time when we must speak Him in the ear, and, as it were, with our lips shut. Secrecy has no less use than divulgation. She said enough, "The Master is come and calleth for thee." What a happy word was this which was here spoken! what a high favor is this that is done, that the Lord of life should personally come and call for Mary! yet such as is not appropriated to her. Thou comest to us still, O Saviour, if not in Thy bodily presence, yet in Thy spiritual; Thou callest us still, if not in Thy personal voice, yet in Thine ordinances! It is our fault if we do not, as this good woman, arise quickly, and come to Thee. Her friends were there about her, who came purposely to condole with her; her heart was full of heaviness, yet, as soon as she hears mention of Christ, she forgets friends, brother, grief, cares, thoughts, and hastes to His presence.

Still was Jesus standing in the place

where Martha left Him. Whether it be noted to express Mary's speed, or His own wise and gracious resolution; His presence in the village had perhaps invited danger, and set off the intended witnesses of the work; or it may be to set forth His zealous desire to despatch the errand He came for; that as Abraham's faithful servant would not receive any courtesy from the house of Bethuel till he had done his master's business concerning Rebekah, so Thou, O Saviour, would not so much as enter into the house of these two sisters in Bethany till Thou hadst effected this glorious work which occasioned Thee thither! It was Thy "meat and drink to do the will of thy Father"; the best entertainment was within Thyself. How do we follow Thee, if we suffer either pleasures or profits to take the wall of Thy services?

Thursday, 20th. *John xi. 38 to 46.* Let us carefully ponder the sevenfold process in the raising of Lazarus. First, it was through suffering, "Again groaning in himself." Second, it was against unbelief, Martha protesting against the removal of the stone. Third, it was in perfect fellowship with God, as demonstrated by the prayer which as He Himself said was for the sake of those around. Fourth, it was with unquestioning authority, as is revealed in the simple and sublime command, "Lazarus, come forth." Fifth, it was in mighty power, for Lazarus "came forth." Sixth, it was to perfection in smallest details, as is shown by His final command to loose him, and let him go. Seventh, it was with division of effect, for many believed on Him, while some reported to His enemies the things that He had done. Herein lies a suggestive revelation of the perpetual facts in the work of Christ, against the evil which has issued in death, and for the restoration of the good which is to abide in unending life.

From L. O. Thompson:

God's power is all sufficient. He does not need human help. The utmost that man can do is little. What little man is required or permitted to do is for his own welfare and improvement. In the realm of nature God has given bodily life, and then continues to uphold its powers, so that man is capable of work within the appointed limits. God has adapted the seed to the soil, the sunshine, the rain, and seasons to harvest; but to man He has given the important work of combining the conditions. God will not plough and scatter the seed; neither will He cut and grind the grain. God stops His work where man's may begin, and begins His where man's must stop. In the realm of the supernatural it was just as easy for Christ to do all, in the raising up of Lazarus, as only a part. But at the grave He said, "Take ye away the stone"; and after the working of the miracle Jesus said unto them, "Loose him and let him go." This the friends of Lazarus might do, and in doing might either receive unmistakable proof of the life-giving power, or show their tender sympathy for the sisters and the risen man by ministering to them and him. It is the Holy Spirit that gives life or renews the soul, and then the means of grace are to be faithfully used in building up a Christ-like character.

Friday, 21st. *John xi. 47 to 57.* This last sign raised the opposition of His foes to the point of definite activity. The degraded condition of things is seen in the fact that the chief priests, who were Sadducean and therefore denied resurrection, made common cause with the Pharisees who, believing in resurrection, were not prepared even in the presence of overwhelming testimony to believe in Him. Note well that what they feared was that the people might make Him King, and so "the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation." What gross self-seeking is here manifested. The nation is already groaning under the iron heel of Roman oppression. They have lost in all highest sense their place and nation, and yet by cunning craftiness these men have arranged to retain personal power. It is this that they are afraid of losing. There is no true patriotism in their position. They do not mind that people shall bend to a yoke, if only they may help in the driving, but if there shall be any possibility of the breaking of the yoke, which will issue in their loss of power, this must be prevented at all costs. This explanation of their opposition is based upon their own argument. The true reason, however, lies much deeper, and is to be discovered in their hatred of a Man Who by word and work denies the materialism of their religious outlook, and rebukes their degradation of the spiritual ideal. The statement of Caiaphas that one must die for the nation was cunning, contemptous, and brutal, yet notice how with scarcely veiled irony John points out that, being high priest, he uttered a true prophecy. The philosophy

of Caiaphas was that if one man troubles the nation it is better to kill him for the good of the nation. And yet, like Balaam of old, he uttered unconsciously a profound truth when he said, "It is expedient for you that one man should die for the people." The decision of the council was that the Master's death must be accomplished, and Jesus retires into a "country near to the wilderness," where He tarries with His disciples, while the last of the twelve hours of the day are passing and the night approaches.

From F. W. Robertson:

There are cases in which it is expedient to choose the sacrifice of one instead of that of many. When a whole army or regiment has mutinied, the commander, instead of general butchery, may select a few to perish as examples to the rest. There is nothing here unjust. The many escape, but the few who die deserve to die. But no principle could justify a commander in selecting an innocent man, condemning him by unjust sentence, and affecting to believe that he was guilty, while the transgressors escaped and learned the enormity of their transgressions by seeing execution done upon the guiltless. No principle can justify —nothing can do more than palliate the conduct of the ship's crew upon the raft who slay one of their number to support their existence on his flesh. No man would justify the parent, pursued in his chariot by wolves over Siberian snows, who throws out one of his children to the pack that the rest may escape while their fangs are buried in their victim. You feel at once expediency has no place here. Life is a trifle compared with law. Better that all should perish by the visitation of God, than that they should be saved by one murder. But it is not our fault if some blind defenders of the truth have converted the self-devotion of love into a Brahminical sacrifice. If the work of redemption be defended by parallels drawn from the most atrocious records and principles of heathenism, let not the fault be laid upon the Bible. We disclaim that as well as they. It makes God a Caiaphas. It makes Him adopt the words of Caiaphas in the sense of Caiaphas. It represents Him in terms which better describe the ungoverned rage of Saul missing his stroke at David, who has offended, and in disappointed fury dashing his javelin at his own son Jonathan.

Saturday, 22nd. *John xii. 1 to 11.* The shadows of the passion are falling across the pathway of Christ. But a few short days remain, and then the cross. He turns to Bethany and the companionship of the three He loved so well, Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. The scene at the supper there places in vivid contrast the representatives of opposing attitudes toward Christ. Mary and Judas arrest our attention. She, having learned sitting at His feet in past days all full of sunshine, and having known the power of His sympathy in the hour of her sorrow, appreciates the nearness of some great death sorrow to her Lord and Master. Pressing nearer to that sorrow than perhaps any other, she laid her costliest gift at His feet, a gift which was but the symbol of her loyalty and her love. He appreciated the action at its true worth, recognizing the anointing to His burial, and gathering up the aroma of the spikenard in such way that its perfume has made fragrant all the centuries. Judas, having utterly failed to understand the Lord, because blinded in self-interest, criticised the imprudence of the action of a love to which he was utterly a stranger, and was rebuked by the One Who valued the uncalculating abandonment of fervent devotion. The two are types, superlative ones it may be granted, and yet forever serving as tests by which we may try our relation to the Lord. The love which defies arithmetical calculation is ever breaking some box of fragrant spikenard upon His feet, and gladdening His heart. The calculating prudence which is more occupied with the gift than the Lord, ever borders upon that treachery which may at last sell Him for thirty pieces of silver.

From John Ker:

But His words, "Lo, I am with you alway," remind us that we have a Saviour Who is also divine. How the shrinking fears of His humanity were reconciled with His true divine nature is not for us to say. There are other great chasms across which we cannot step, and some of them in our own history. We cannot say why our body, with the feelings and fears that belong to it, should often fall so short of the confidence in a higher life sometimes gained by our spirit. But it is possible for us to hold fast both. So in the memory of the death of Christ we must seek to realize His divinity. The promise to be with us always is not completed in continuance of His last words with us, or of His example, or His influence, or of His death-memorials going down from age to age. It has a deeper meaning, the promise of a presence which implies an omnipresence; so that at every communion He is divinely repeating the words: "This

is my body: this is the new covenant in my blood," and bringing home to the heart which looks to Him His nearness in the spirit and the life. And if in this communion, then always and everywhere. No sacrament should cut off the Lord Jesus Christ from communion with the rest of our life, but should remind us how He can be present with us through it all. "Lo, I am with you alway" is a promise to be constantly beside us.

Sunday, 23rd. *John xii. 12 to 19.* From the quietness and seclusion of Bethany the Master passed to Jerusalem. A spontaneous outburst of welcome, for the people expecting Him went forth to meet Him, bearing palm branches. A public entry, pre-arranged by Christ, culminated in that great scene which fulfilled the prophecy: "Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt." It was a strange triumph. The disciples did not understand it, for they failed to link it with the prophecy until after His ascension. The shout of the crowd was of little real worth, for they were swayed by low motives, and before the sound of the hosanna has died away the clamor for crucifixion has begun. Yet He moves quietly on, His heart gladdened, not by the present worthless welcome, but because He knew that by the very agony to which He was moving, He would ensure another day of triumph when the shoutings of the ransomed would never be changed into the howls of rebellious rejection. That is the point of supreme value, that He moves through the worthless present, transmuting it into the triumphant future. This is a perpetual method of God. No human failure ever diverts Him from the purposes of love. It may be added that no present event can be perfectly understood. Well is it for us if we have learned to follow, to trust, to wait.

From G. Hutcheson:

These things understood not His disciples at first. Men may be in the midst of great mercies and actings, and may not only be witnesses of the Lord's working and the works of others, but even actors themselves in that which for the time they do little or nothing understand; for these things understood not the disciples at the first. Men have much brutish ignorance fed with inadvertence and may be little expecting the things that God is doing in such a time or case, and therefore do not discern them. When the Lord's people are ignorant and under a cloud, He useth not to take advantage of them, but can guide them as right as may be, so that a backlook thereunto when they get light will be sweet unto them; for in all this they act as rightly as if they had understood, and afterward they find that what was written of Him they had done unto Him. However, the Lord for a time suffers His people to lie under clouds, and ignorant of what He or they are doing, yet in due time He will clear them in so far as is needful; for afterward they remembered. The treasures of knowledge hid up in Christ were not fully opened up till Christ was glorified; for when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they, etc. Hereby is kept a true proportion betwixt the head and the members, that they shall be first exalted before they get their full allowance.

Monday, 24th. *John xii. 20 to 36.* The coming of the Greeks was to Jesus the symbol of the larger work He had come to do. When He heard of their request He said, "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified." This title, "the Son of man," of which He was so fond, links Him to the whole human family, and the approach of these men outside the Jewish covenant was to Him prophetic of that gathering to Him of a people out of all nations and peoples and tongues. He was deeply conscious, however, that the gateway of entrance for these was that of His cross and passion. Through that cross the Son of man would be glorified, because through that cross such seekers would find all that they most needed. This surely was the first intention of His words about the corn of wheat. For the Greeks to see Him then would be for them to fail utterly to understand Him. He was the lonely seed corn. Presently they should see Him in the glorious harvest, following His passing into darkness and death. This led Him to reveal His sense of the coming cross. His soul was troubled, and yet there was a stronger passion in Him than that sense of coming pain which troubled Him. It was His passion for the glory of the Divine name, and He did not pray to be saved from the approaching hour, but that His Father will glorify His name. In answer to that prayer the Divine voice speaks, and upon the authority of the promise made Christ utters the most wonderful words about the cross on record, declaring it to be a throne of judgment, a force of eviction,

a center of attraction. It is noticeable that the story ends with the words, "Jesus . . . . departed and hid himself from them," thus declining to satisfy the curiosity of the Greeks until the work should be complete by which their deepest need should be fully met.

From Joseph Parker:

How Jesus Christ always rejoiced when any outsider came to Him! It is most instructive to notice the difference in Jesus Christ's mental mood when any heathen came and wanted to speak to him. Said He on one occasion, "Verily, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." On another occasion He said, "There hath not returned to give glory to God, save this stranger." On another occasion He said that a Samaritan came where the dying man was. Thus He rebuked the Jew; He would not accord to the Jews, locally and temporarily His own nation, the honor of having cured or helped the wounded man; it was upon the head of a Samaritan, a stranger, an outsider, that He put His crown. And the Syrophenician woman overthrew Him in the friendly wrestle, lifted Him up and threw Him by the might of love. He wished to be overthrown; He loves to be beaten in a controversy when He tries our faith, and momentarily obscures our hope that afterwards He may fill it with a brighter light; He loves to give way under the pressure of that gracious violence which takes the kingdom of heaven by storm. How His heart glowed! How He leaped beyond the cross and entered into His glory! How eloquently He talked when He heard of these Greeks asking about Him!

Tuesday, 25th. *John xii. 37 to 43.* Notwithstanding the signs wrought, the people did not believe, and this fact was a fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah. No worker for God has ever entered so fully and deeply into that great wail of the old prophet as did Jesus Himself,

"Lord, who hath believed our report?
And to whom hath the arm of the Lord
been revealed?"

John states the reason of the unbelief, and at first it startles us.

"For this cause they could not believe, for that Isaiah said again,

"'He hath blinded their eyes, and He hardened their heart;
Lest they should see with their eyes, and
perceive with their heart,
And should turn,
And I should heal them.'"

The first impression is that if God had blinded the eyes of people so that they could not see, and hardened their hearts so that they could not believe, then there can be no blame attaching to them. But that is to misunderstand the deepest meaning of the statement. The only sense in which it can ever be said that God blinds the eyes or hardens the heart, is that when man refuses to see, and refuses to believe, he loses the power of sight, and becomes hardened in the very nature of the case. This is an irrevocable law and as God is the Author of all law, He is said to do what is done naturally. Thus behind the blindness and hardness which prevented men seeing and understanding Christ, was the sin of disobedience in the presence of previous light, the penalty of which was inability to appreciate the new light.

From Joseph Parker:

"When he saw that he was condemned he repented himself." Is there not hope of a man who is capable of any degree of repentance, even when repentance takes upon itself the darker shade of horror and remorse? I know what the word is which is translated "repented," and I remember with joy that it is a word which is used of the son who said he would not go, and afterwards repented and went; it is the word which Paul used of himself on one occasion in writing to the Corinthians. But even if the word be rendered "was filled with remorse and shame and despair," I should say, "So much the better for Judas." Under such circumstances I should have more hope for a man who had absolutely no hope of himself, than of a man who could sufficiently control himself to think that even such a sin—infinite in wickedness as it must have appeared to his own mind—could ever be forgiven. It is easy for us who never experience the agony to say what Judas ought to have done: how he ought to have wept and prayed and sought forgiveness as we now should seek it. We cannot intermeddle with his sorrow, nor ought we to harshly judge the method of his vengeance.

Wednesday, 26th. *John xii. 44 to 50.* This paragraph chronicles what is evidently the last public testimony of Jesus. It is very brief, but very clear, consisting of a summarized statement of His claims. It is made just as the light of the working day is passing, and the hour of darkness is approaching. This is seen by comparing the thirty-sixth verse of the twelfth chapter with the first verse of the thirteenth chapter.

"While ye have the light, believe on the light, that ye may become sons of light." Here the reference is most certainly to His own presence amongst them, and that is almost at an end,—"Jesus knowing that his hour was come that He should depart out of this world." Here is a statement that the day's work is nearly over, and the night is coming. At this point then He makes this last public statement, and it gathers around His Person and His teaching, and the purpose of both. As to His Person He declares that He is the Light, and He is that because He reveals God. "He that beholdeth me beholdeth him that sent me." As to His teaching He declares it to be authoritative, and that because it is from God. "The Father which sent me, he hath given me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." The issue of the whole is life eternal. Nothing can be more sublime than these closing public utterances of Jesus. They are in perfect harmony with the marvelous conception of Him, presented to us in this gospel, as the revealed Love and Light and Life of heaven.

From T. H. Day:

The worthlessness of the men for whose commendation we are ready to renounce Christ! Let us know why and for whom we are prepared to make shipwreck of faith and good conscience. For what did Judas betray Christ? The favor of the worthless Pharisees and thirty pieces of silver. For what did Esau renounce his birthright? And for what do we give up the hope of acceptance with Christ? For the wretched smile of triflers, for the ribaldry of Paine and the "don't know" of Spencer—a mess of pottage indeed. "An atheist's laugh is a poor exchange for a Deity offended." The men of whom this world was not worthy were not the men who bowed to ruling opinions. Paul conferred not with flesh and blood; Columbus turned a deaf ear to worldly wisdom or he would never have discovered a new world. Had Milton been swayed by popular opinion he would never have left a name immortal.

Thursday, 27th. *John xiii. 1 to 11.* Having now turned His back upon the people that have rejected Him, He devotes Himself exclusively in these last hours to His own. "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end . . . ." All that follows is in the consciousness of the statement with which this section opens. Jesus knew "that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father." He knew, moreover, that the Father had given all things into His hands, that "He came forth from God, and goeth unto God." What a wonderful picture this gives us of our Lord's contemplation of all that lay before Him. If we have seen His sense of the awfulness of the cross, here we have a picture of the perfect triumph of His spirit over all such sense in this other consciousness of the real meaning of His exodus. He came from the Father. All things are delivered unto Him of the Father. He is going to the Father. There is the ring of a great consciousness of triumph in the whole statement. Having this clearly in mind, His first action with His disciples is the more remarkable. He girds Himself with a towel, and proceeds to wash their feet. It was the action of a slave, and expressed supremely, perhaps as it had never been expressed before, His devotion to His own.

Selected:

It is not strange that the hour of departure should be the hour of quickened affection. When the child leaves home, father and mother seem more dear than before. And had this been the Saviour's home, and those round Him His relations, it would not have been strange that he should have felt more strongly for them than at any previous time. On the other hand, when for purposes of help, business, or pleasure one has long been in exile, and the day comes for return, although he has made pleasant acquaintances, yet the thought of home swallows up every other. Applying this, who can imagine the vision that arose before Jesus at this hour? The infinitude of His power was to be restored, and the companionship He had known from eternity. Yet at this hour it is said that "having loved," etc. This is wonderful. For consider what the disciples were. If Christ had dwelt in the accomplishments of the heavenly land, what must they have seemed to Him? Not one had any extraordinary endowment except John, and none save he and Peter and James have left any record except their names.

Friday, 28th. *John xiii. 12 to 20.* While the self-evident lesson of the washing of the disciples' feet was that of our Lord's humility and abandonment to the service of His own, its particular application is undoubtedly the revelation of the fact that He has made provision for the cleansing of His disciples from defilement contracted by the

way. The whole action was Eastern, and the picture suggested to the mind is that of the bath. In Eastern custom a person when taking a bath would walk to the dressing room, and in that walk would in all probability contract defilement. It was necessary, therefore, not again to plunge into the bath, but to wash the feet before adjusting the sandals. This illumines Christ's words, "He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." Thus the Lord symbolizes by this washing the fact that the highest act of service that believers can render to each other is that of restoring the fallen brother, and help him in love through the ministry of the Word to cleanse him from defilement contracted in his walk. From this sacred service He exempts Judas, and intimates to the disciples that one of those familiar with Him will lift up the heel against Him. It is very beautiful to notice His reason for making this reference to Judas at this point, as declared in His own words, "I tell you before it come to pass that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am." When the events of His betrayal will in all probability stagger them, they will at last be strengthened by the remembrance of the fact that He foresaw both betrayal and its method. Thus as ever, He prepares for the difficulties to come.

Selected:

High religious faith. In the management of daily disappointments and small vexations only a devout mind attains any real success. How wonderfully the mere insect cares, that are ever on the wing in the noon-day heat of life, have power to sting even the giant minds around which they sport! It may be absurd and immoral to be teased by trifles; but while you remain in the dust it will annoy you, and there is no help for it but to retire into a higher and grassier region, where the sultry road is visible from afar. We must go in contemplation out of life, ere we can see how its troubles are lost, like evanescent waves, in the deeps of eternity, in the immensity of God. How welcome to many a child of anxiety and toil to be transferred from the heat and din of the city to the midnight garden or mountain top. And like refreshment does a high faith, with its infinite prospects, open to the worn and weary; no laborious travels are needed for the devout mind, for it carries within it Alpine heights and starlit skies which it may reach at a moment's notice.

Saturday, 29th. *John xiii. 21 to 32.* Evil ever troubled Christ, and the thought of His betrayal troubled Him, not, as I think, because of the pain that was coming to Him, but because of the evil that was working the pain. He now makes a more emphatic statement, that one of them shall betray Him, and privately answering the question of John indicates the betrayer to him alone. At this point Judas withdrew from the company. How much of meaning there is in the stages. "He . . . . went out . . . . and it was night." Yet notice that immediately following it Jesus says, "Now is the Son of man glorified." The night without, the shining of glory within. This statement of Christ concerning His glorification is, in the light of the going out of Judas, a very remarkable one. First, "the Son of man glorified"—in the going out of evil, and in the fact that evil has gone forth to express itself in final sin, and yet under the government of God to the accomplishment of a Divine purpose. The Son of man is glorified in the fact of his exclusion, and glorified in the fact that he has gone to encompass that death through which the larger glory shall be wrought. The Lord, moreover, declares that "God is glorified in him; and God shall glorify him in himself." What an echo there is in these words of Jesus of the words spoken from heaven, as recorded in the previous chapter, verse 28.

From C. H. Spurgeon:

You naturally ask, was there anything noticeable or distinguishing in the character of this much-favored disciple. In our blindness we often fancy qualities which do not really exist; and so, on more intimate acquaintance, we are often disappointed. But the Lord cannot thus be mistaken; and so, when we find one distinguished from his companions as "the disciple whom Jesus loved," we infer that, through grace, he must have possessed some qualities which the others had not, or not in the same degree. What was it, then, in John, on whom the Lord complacently rested? It was not any peculiarly high talent, for in this Paul was superior. It was not any peculiar aptitude for business and the conduct of affairs, for in this Peter seems to have excelled. It was for the qualities of the heart, rather than the head, that John was distinguished; and the secret of the Lord's peculiar delight in him is perhaps found in this: "I love them that love me, and they who seek me early shall find me."

Sunday, 30th. *John xiii. 33 to xiv. 15.* The exclusion of Judas has made possible the final instruction of Christ to the immediate circle of His disciples. In this section we have the first statement, difficulties which it suggests, and our Lord's dealings with them. The statement of the whole section lies within the words "Yet a little while I am with you." He declares the fact of His own going away, and lays upon them the one law which is to condition all their days, and create their influence. They are to love one another, and by this men are to know them for His disciples. This statement calls forth Peter's question, "Whither art thou going?" The Lord replies to his question by telling him, first, that he cannot accompany Him, seeing he is not yet ready. Yet He charges all of them not to let their heart be troubled in view of their own unreadiness, for the realization of their highest aspirations. He then answers Peter's question, and tells them that He is going to prepare a place for them, and that He will come again and receive them. Thomas then raises a difficulty. He says that they do not know where He is going, and therefore cannot know the way. To this the Lord replies that He is the Way and the Truth and the Life; and incidentally declares what He has declared in so many words, that He is going to the Father, and no man can come to the Father but by Him, therefore He is the Way. The mention of the Father calls from Philip that great cry, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," and the Lord then in words that need no comment, declares His revelation of, and relation to, the Father, showing that by relation to Him they receive the revelation of, and enter upon, relation to the Father Himself.

From F. W. Robertson:

Broadly, the love of Christ was the spirit of giving all He had to give. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend." Christ's love is not a sentiment; it was a self-giving. To what His adversaries bore testimony: "He hath saved others; himself he cannot save." Often as we have read these words, did it ever strike us, and if not, does it not bring a flash of surprise when we perceive it, that these words, meant as taunt, were really the noblest panegyric, a testimony higher and more adequate far than even that of the centurion? "He saved others; himself he cannot save." The first clause contained the answer to the second—"himself he cannot save." How *could* He, having saved others? How can any keep what he gives? How can any live for self, when he is living for others? Unconsciously, those enemies were enunciating the very principle of Christianity, the grand law of all existence, that only by losing self can you save others; that only by giving life you can bless. Love gives itself. The mother spends herself in giving life to her child; the soldier dies for his country; nay, even the artist produces nothing destined for immortality, nothing that will live, except so far as he has forgotten himself, and merged his very being in his work.